614 /1/ Cancuc is a Tzeltal town of Chiapas, Mexico, whose
[101] social organization is based on exogamous patrilineal clans.
[776] These clans are intimately related to: 1) the nagual or guardian
[551] spirit, which is given the name of *lab* among the Indians of this
[613] region; 2) the native surnames that constitute the lineages within
[621] the clans; 3) the "barrios," as the Spanish chroniclers called the endogamous tribal subdivisions (called *calpulli* among the Aztecs and *culibal* in Cancuc); 4) the kinship system; and 5) the behavior.

614 All the individuals belonging to a clan consider themselves
601 "legitimate siblings" /Sp. "*hermanos legítimos*"/, using the terms that designate this class of relatives. This theoretical consanguineous kinship is expressed by means of the word *chapomal* -- a Cancuquero /a person from Cancuc/ calls another "brother" be-
614 cause he is his *chapomal*. This form of usage is indicative of
601 common ancestry, something that we were not able to clarify, as
124 our questions on this point only received answers that showed that
829 they had lost any notion of a real or mythical ancestor. Our informants invariably explained this situation with the expressions: "it is the custom," "San Juan /Saint John/ (Patron Saint of Cancuc) ordered it so," or "it was ordered by Manuel (God)." What does constitute a clear concept in the minds of all is that "formerly" each clan lived in a cave, from which its members went out in the form of human beings to populate the earth and in which lived the naguales, or *lab*, that bound them to their place of origin.
[775] The soul came back to this cave after death. There are as many caves as the number of clans.

614 The children belonged to the paternal clan. A woman who marries does not become a member of the clan of her husband.

/2/ Exogamy is strictly respected; persons belonging to the same clan never marry each other.

[591] The clans are not local, as their members live in all of the places and rancherias.

[178] At present the clans lack chiefs, this institution having dis-
[669] appeared about 30 years ago, according to all our information, when the zone that we are studying underwent a chaotic period due to political revolts.

/2 cont./

614 The chieftaincy of each clan was filled by the oldest man,
887 who was called *chunel*. (It seems to have the same meaning as
156 the word *catinab*, but some informants recognized the latter as
the one used in the adjacent municipality of Oxchuc.) The office
was not hereditary, and upon the death of a *chunel* the oldest man
156 of the clan was venerated as such. The chief of the clan was respected
614 and feared, because he was recognized as endowed with
888 supernatural power which, through his *lab*, he exercised over all
776 the members of the clan. Two informants of advanced age defined
554 the *chunel* as "the oldest one and the greatest sorcerer."
The *lab* feeds on souls, and a person who has "done wrong" is
776 "eaten" by the *lab* of the one offended and dies. In this way
761 social control was exercised on and among the members of the
[784] clan, never going beyond the limits of this. The life of the individual
[626] is intimately bound to the life of the *lab*, or guardian
776 spirit: the death of one brings with it the death of the other. All
the Cancuqueros have their *lab*, but they hide it and sometimes
[756] deny it. The curer knows which is the *lab* of the sick person because
[827] "he hears it in the pulse." The *lab* reveals itself in dreams
[787] to "its owner," with whom it speaks because "it is his own company."
One person discovers the *lab* of another "because he sees
it." The *lab* takes care of its owner, defends him, and is the instrument
178 of revenge for an injury unjustly received. Today this
614 concept is intimately bound up with the omniscience of the patron
626 saint; only with the permission of San Juan can a *lab* "eat" the
776 soul of a *chapomal*, or "clan brother," and this permission is
granted only in the case when the saint is unfavorably impressed
by the conduct of the individual. In any case the *lab* never
wreaks its vengeance except for a bad act that would fully justify
614 it according to the social morality. As can be seen, social control
626 was not only rooted in the chief of the clan, but this function
extended to the whole group, as happens at present.

/3/

● 178 584 614 There are informants who remember the time when there were chuneles, and the younger ones know about it because their fathers have told them. The social conflict brought about by the disappearance of this institution seems to have its most intense point in what concerns marriage. It was the chunel of the clan of a girl to whom the parents of a boy would go to ask for her in marriage. He received gifts and gave his consent in case he thought it advantageous, and, accompanied by the boy and his parents, he went to the house of her parents, to whom he presented the pleas of the young man. No one could oppose the decision of the chunel. An informant adds: [586] "If the woman does not love her husband and leaves him and flees, the man advises the chunel and the chunel eats the woman." She dies if she does not respect the wishes of the oldest man of her clan. Now that there [578] are no chuneles, a boy, with his parents or without them, is accompanied by any member of the clan to which the girl belongs; generally the parents are opposed, the girl is not willing, and the use of force, which serves instead of the traditional fear and reverence, only gives rise to conflicts, bringing irreconcilable hatreds.

614 Formerly the clans of Cancuc were four: Chik, Chejeb, Ijká, and Boj. At present only the first three exist, the members of the Boj clan having been incorporated into the Ijká clan. This fusion of two clans took place a short time before the political revolts to [125] which we have referred. While taking the census of the town, we found marriages between individuals belonging to these two clans, concluded before the fusion. Since that date "the Boj know that they are now Ijká," and clan exogamy has prevented these unions; "If a Boj marries an Ijká now, the two will die," say my informants, "because they are chapomales."

614 539 776 To an inquiry about the reason for the fusion and the manner of accomplishing it, our informants gave the following explanations, which show undeniably the close relationship existing between clan and nagual:

/6 cont./

551
621
614

Ajkol-culibal	Alán-culibal
19 Chik	14 Chik
13 Chejeb	18 Chejeb
22 Ijká	6 Ijká

/7/ Among the Spanish surnames we have 6 that belong exclusively to Alán- and 6 to Ajkol-culibal (not counting the case in which a native surname of the Chik clan is joined to two different Spanish surnames that are found in both culibales). The remaining 14 Spanish surnames are combined with surnames from the two culibales.

621 Today the culibal is not endogamous, but we believe it
582 possible that it was in former times (as we have found in recent
● 178 investigations of the Tzotzil group of San Pablo Chalchihuitán of
174 this region). The present possibility of changing residence and
551 the incorporation of native surnames originating from a culibal
(or perhaps two) that have disappeared within the boundaries of
the two remaining make the reconstruction of the pre-Hispanic
621 culibal impossible in this case. According to the data obtained
582 in our census, 62.5 o/o of the marriages were concluded between
551 persons whose native surnames originated from the same culibal.
[125] In spite of the low percentage, nevertheless the custom of mar-
[166] riage between people of the same culibal predominates (we should
[613] not forget the mobility permitted in recent times, because of which
residents of one culibal are persons whose lineages originate from
the other), although cases of marriage between persons belonging
[614] to the two different culibales also abound. It is almost always
preferred to look for a wife among the women of the same place
or rancheria, but at present we can say that clan exogamy is the
only thing that regulates marriage.

621 Each culibal has its own chiefs, elected from and by those
622 members who have filled political-religious positions in the
[631] Chakel or Ayuntamiento /municipal government/. The clans are
[614] taken into account in this election, rigorously taking turns. The
[65] culibal chiefs assign the communal lands, organize the collective
tasks for the benefit of the community, pray for the health and

563 Citalá, Guaquitepec, Chilón, Yajalón, and Petalcingo relations between Indians and Ladinos are more friendly, and the Indians are regarded as milder and more tractable.

181 Of the strongly Indian towns, Cancuc is the most conservative, Chanal the most progressive.

In respect to official political organization, these villages are divided according 631 to their importance and the number of their inhabitants, into free municipalities 563 (*municipios libres*) and dependent municipalities (*agencias municipales*). The former are those which have the right to choose their own government, upon which formal administration depends. To this category belong Amatenango, Chanal, Tenejapa, Oxchuc, Ococingo, Chilón, and Bachajón. Until a short time ago the municipal governments of these settlements were composed of Ladinos in the principal posts and of Indians in the subordinate positions. At the present time the government is seeking to reverse this situation so that the Indians have the greater authority; it is for this reason that the governments of the four villages [177] first mentioned are now headed by Indians. This change has brought about marked alterations in certain places in the social equilibrium that before existed between the two ethnic elements which compose the population.

Villages of the latter category are those which depend, in administrative matters, on a free municipality. In these cases authority is represented in the first place by the *agente municipal*, who is named by the central municipal government. This post is always discharged by a Ladino. In most instances the municipal agent compensates for the meagerness of his salary by controlling the sale of rum in the village which he administers. The other members of the municipal government are chosen almost always from the Indian group.

184 In several of the highland communities, notably Amatenango, Chanal, and, 243 to a much less extent, Tenejapa, the Indian grows (in addition to the universal 439 maize) a certain amount of wheat for export; the Ladinos of Oxchuc cultivate this crop, but in Cancuc, where there are no Ladinos, wheat is not grown. (Wheat is 433 also grown in the Tzotzil towns of Chamula and Huistan.) Other money crops 241 of the highlands are chickpeas, peas, oranges, and other fruit. Some coffee is grown in San Martin; it is the principal export from Yajalón and Petalcingo. In Bachajón, Citalá, Guaquitepec, and Chilón a principal produce is brown sugar, made locally from sugar cane locally raised. Cancuc is the only village that cultivates cotton [286] commercially; the production in the other communities is insignificant. The local manufacture of loom-woven clothing is rapidly disappearing. Most Tzeltal com- [178] munities are without beehives, but there is considerable apiculture in Sivacá, and 231 a little beekeeping is also practised in Tenango, Bachajón, and Yajalon. Apparently 184 the bees kept are wild colonies brought to the villages in the sections of hollow log they are made to inhabit. The raising of hogs and poultry is a principal economic 233 recourse in all the Indian settlements. The beef cattle industry has always been [654] in the hands of Ladinos; however, recently the Government, acting through the Centers of Native Education, has sought to stimulate the industry among the Indians.

Death as a Way of Life: The Increasing Resort to Homicide in a Maya Indian Community[1]

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105 *The breaking-down of a social-control system based on belief in the guardianship of the spiritual ancestors and their temporal agents, the curers, is reflected in a rising homicide rate as people turn to individual sanctions when threatened. The acts of homicide differ in their social significance according to who is killed, the context, the agency, and the motivation of the killer. Thirty-seven homicides between 1938 and 1965, analyzed in terms of these component variables, reflect the conflicts arising from competition in new economic enterprises, the rising suspicion of curers' abuse of their supernatural power, and the loss of belief in the guardianship of the ancestors.*

121 THE social impact of homicide has caused
682 some analysts[2] to treat it and its supposed
inverted complement, suicide, as one
[762] kind of behavior with a single meaning, ignoring
Durkheim's caveat that behavioral rubrics
categorize diverse phenomena. Here I shall
•[101] analyze the variety of strategies involved in
killing in a Mexican community, which I shall
call Teklum (the Tzeltal term for village), and
endeavor to show how rules of behavior are expressed
in killing and in attempts to avoid being
killed. Further, I shall endeavor to point
out what these indicate about structural and
organizational changes both within the community
and in its relations with the wider
society. Since suicide is absent, except for a
[762] single case of a madman, I have restricted my
enquiry to homicide.

Teklum is a predominantly Indian township
161 of Mexico. The population of the town center
162 --about 1,900--includes only one Ladino,
[101] or non-Indian, family, that of the schoolteacher.
The sense of community is limited to
621 people living in the center and in the four
nearby hamlets (*barrios*).

621 The town center is divided physically and
socially into two endogamous sections, called
632 "upper" and "lower." The outlying hamlets
are linked to the nearest section by social and
economic ties. The civil and religious posts of
621 the town are, in local theory, apportioned
632 evenly between the sections. This was in fact
•178 true until the 1950's; for each of the ranked
posts had a paired complement, so that both
sides of the dual division were represented, and
the single posts of president and *síndico* (the
president's administrative assistant) were al-

621
632 ternated for each three-year term between the
178 upper and lower sections.

But with the recent increase in dealings
621 between the national and regional administra-
tive centers and the local communities, re-
632 cruitment into office as president and síndico
178 has come to depend upon the candidates'
554 possessing a knowledge of Spanish, literacy,
and familiarity with the ways of Ladino
society. Because of the relative scarcity of such
skills, selection of these two officials has tended
to ignore the former residence requirements
[887] relating to the dual division. Along with this
change in the criteria for selecting these offi-
cials has come a decrease in the power and the
authority exercised by the *principales*—elders
from each side of the dual division who rose to
their position by passing through all of the
lower offices in the hierarchy—and a corre-
sponding increase in the importance of the
presidency.

621 This dual division also affected the structure
632 of the curing profession. The curers are men
who can overcome sickness caused by witch-
754 craft because of their possession of an animal
756 spirit (*swayohel*) and their knowledge of ritual.
In each of the two sections of the town was a
leading curer (*statal ʔuʔul*) who, by virtue of
his age, experience, and recognized authority,
was able to control entry into the profession.
Their function was to prevent as well as cure,
for the leading curers were also charged with
guarding their section against the entry of
621 witchcraft. In the last two decades, leadership
632 by recognized elder curers from each side of the
dual division has been lost, and along with it
756 control over limiting the practicing of curing.
178

682 539 783 Thus I fare well. I have not been killed, nor have I been sick.

682 156 828 A good man is of one heart, and he shows it by his humility, *ben k'un yoʔtan* or "very soft heart." He can drink with friends on either side of the dual division of the town, and he is called upon in many household fiestas to greet the guests of the house-owner.

But the man who is "very strong of heart," *ben toyol yoʔtan*, who "fails to take people into account," *ma šʔawa ta kwenta*, who "abuses people," *me ya wut*, has means of survival despite the many threats to his life. He sur-
[608] rounds himself with a circle of *compadres*, or
[756] godparents; he especially picks out curers, both to mitigate the use of their power against him, and for them to serve as intermediaries if he should have enemies with animal spirits. When a threat becomes imminent, he may stay within his house or limit his range of activities to a very circumscribed area, always taking a weapon when he does go out. He will usually
[273] try to limit his drinking, or give it up entirely. These short-range rules of avoidance are clearly indicated by the circumstances in which killings occur: in the hills or at night, when the victim is under the influence of liquor.

682 These 37 cases of homicide reveal a regularity in the kinds of people and situations involved. The victims are most often men who
[578] assert power, principally curers, or men who violate standards of behavior by abusiveness or theft. Their killers are often linked to them by kinship or neighborhood, the bonds in which tensions are greatest. The regularity of time and place of homicide suggests the precautions that can be taken to avoid being
682 killed if one has an enemy. The general failure
626 of the community social-control agents to bring negative sanctions against a killer indicates that homicide is an accepted solution for interpersonal conflict. The structural setting that validates this behavior is discussed below.

682

II. STRUCTURAL CHANGE AND SOCIAL CONTROL

178 121 626 Case analysis, useful for discerning certain patterns, is inadequate for understanding the interrelationships among a variety of social changes in the community. An increasing rate of homicide of this magnitude indicates fundamental changes in the social matrix in which individual decisions are made: it suggests not

682 only a rise in the tensions that provoke conflict,
● 178 but an undermining of the social-control
121 mechanisms for channeling them. The perception
of these changes by the members of the
626 society makes for shifts in the individual calculi,
grossly measured in changes in the rate of
behavior. In order to understand the interrelated
[128] problems of the sources of the increasing
tensions and the reasons homicide is chosen as
a means of resolving them, I have reconstructed
the course of social change in the
period from 1935 to 1965.

Increasing Social Tensions

178
556 New economic enterprises have increased
wealth differences in the community. The best
measure of this is in the increase in cattle-holding,
which is a socially approved way of
spending money. Twenty-five years ago, there
were only a half-dozen men with cattle, and
they had only one or two head each. Today,
178 one of the herders in the community has 200
233 head of cattle, and 75 percent of the households
556 have one or more each.

Cattle-herding is a "new" industry in the
sense that instead of just having a team of
oxen to help with agricultural labor, men are
233 breeding cattle for profit. Because the cattle
685 roam freely, there is much loss, and this leads
to accusations of theft. I have never heard
such accusations directed against anyone outside
the community; crime as well as positive
moral relationships is confined within the
682 boundaries of this corporate community. Suspected
685 cattle thieves are killed by the cattle-owner
[474] or by a killer hired by the cooperative of
cattle-owners. Such killings account for six of
the 37 cases analyzed above (Table 1).

178 The illicit distilling of liquor has also added
274 to the town's prosperity. The liquor industry
was introduced about 15 years ago, but the
number of distillers has increased from 5 to 40
[438] in the last five years. From an enterprise
formerly meeting only local market needs,
[439] contraband liquor is now sold as far away as
the coastal area and across the border in
274 Guatemala. A cooperative of distillers has reduced
474 the frictions that immediately followed
the introduction of liquor-distilling. The
cooperative pays the fines of any member
caught distilling, and in addition threatens to
use group action against informers, who were
formerly tempted to earn the 200 pesos offered
[578] by federal agents. But the envy aroused by the
sight of those who profit from this enterprise,

274
474 as with the cattle industry, is a covert cause
578 for personal attacks on other grounds.

A third enterprise, trucking, has caused a
494 realignment of political interests in factions
474 associated with two truck-owning cooperatives.
Membership in one of the cooperatives, or
578 patronage of one of the two trucks, arouses
the enmity of members of the other cooperative.
Several threats have been made on the
lives of the owners and the operators, but the
only damage done has been to tires.

The tensions resulting from the introduction
682 of these new enterprises cannot be fully
578 measured by the deaths attributed to direct
economic conflict. Wealth differences resulting
682 from the new enterprises excite envy, and with
578 it come accusations of witchcraft. In this community,
556 witchcraft killing does not perform
754 the normative function of reducing wealth
differentiation that Kluckhohn saw operating
[114] among the Navaho (1944), since it is the poor
man who is killed as a witch, not the rich man.
[683] The slaying of the envious witch exacerbates
the economic differentiation that provides the
seedbed for conflict.

Another new source of tension is found in the
578 growing demand for political leadership or
423 even independence from the township by the
668 *ejido* colonies formed since land reform went
into effect in 1937. The inept maneuvers of two
[682] founders of the ejido colonies in hot country
resulted in two homicides (cases 12 and 18 in
● [178] Table 1).[8] The increasing strength of these
hamlets will mean that more attempts will be
made in the future to gain political equality
and/or independence. Whether this will result
in increasing homicides will depend on social-control
agencies external to the Indian communities.

682 Homicide occurring as a direct result of
578 economic and political competition represents
a new strategy in the community. The decision
[626] to kill rather than to use other negative sanctions
is related to the social-control mechanisms
discussed below.

Changing Mechanisms of Social Control

626 A system of social control rests not only on
182 the exercise of negative sanctions, but on the
sense of personal security derived from confi-
[756] dence in the institutions of control. In Teklum,
the maintenance of control was formerly
[769] centered in the guardianship against malevolent
spirits held by the ancestor spirits and
000 the curers. The "police force," made up of ten

625 626 The "police force", made up of ten Indians of the town who served without pay for a year, acted as errand boys more than as guardians of public safety. The townspeople conformed to the cultural code of behavior because of a sense that their welfare was being cared for.

626 178 756 [128] More recently, the breakdown of certain structural features and competition between new and old leaders have undermined nonviolent methods for the maintenance of social control. These changes will be discussed in terms of (1) the organization of the curing profession, (2) conflict between the curers and the civil authority, and (3) how both the curing profession and the civil authority are affected by the breakdown of the old dual division of the town.

[124] *(1) Organization of the curing profession.* Perception of structural changes in the curing profession and their effect on attitudes are indicated in the following statement by an informant:

> Formerly there were not many curers. Only two—one in the low side and the other in the high side. They alone spoke together. They walked every night, looking and watching over the pueblo to see that no illness was brought in, checking to see who was bringing it and to see if there was any illness of God [reference to contagious diseases]. They saw which of the children had a soul [774] [reference to the third soul, the swayohel or animal spirit, which gives the power to cure and to do evil].
>
> If anyone wanted to be cured, they bathed them, cured them, and in a little while people got better because there was good illness only. If later on it turned into a disease of the devil, with their animal spirit they seized the force of the illness.
>
> When there was a contagious disease, and a witch "brought heat," and the children began to die, the two curers alone consulted and waited to see who had brought the evil and where they lived. One of them went to the town hall and gave an account of the fact that they had taken care of the evil and gotten rid of it. It was not necessary to gather together the pueblo—only the two knew what was the matter and how to care for it.
>
> The [two] leader curers of each section [*statal ʔuʔuletik*] alone ordered other curers. No one else could enter curing until permitted by the leaders. They continued in power until they died, and then one of the younger curers took over.
>
> Beginning in 1940, more curers started to enter on their own accord. The elder curer had died, and his successor was not recognized. People saw that someone could pulse, and so they would ask him to cure.
>
> Now when there is an epidemic, the president

> 626 178 756 orders the curers to gather together. The curers look for the man who has "brought the heat." And then they kill him. Formerly it was not so.

The statement points to two interacting features of change within the curing profession: (1) the loss of leadership and of control over entry into the profession and (2) the loss of faith in the guardianship function of the curers. The effect of these changes has been to reduce security and the maintenance of social control.

756 178 [621] Formerly the recognized leader of the curers in each section of the dual division legitimized entry of new curers and expelled those who abused their power. When these curers died, there was no one of sufficient power to replace them. In listing curers who are active today, there is no agreement as to who the leading curers are or even as to whether there are leaders.

756 Loss of leadership in the curing profession has led to competition among the curers. There is discussion such as the following concerning who is the strongest:

> When N (a former curer, killed as a witch) was alive, he was land-control officer. When we were half drunk one day, the president asked him: "Tell me who is the strongest of all you who know curing." N replied, "Ah, you want to hear. There is no one who is very strong, only the dead Mamal K and myself." The president said, "But Mam D is good." N said, "Less so. I know because one time we proved it, at a meeting of the curers. I arrived as a sheep, and 'took out' [literal translation of *ʔlok'*] one black dog. He took out a sheep and a pig and ordered them to run. And I saw that they could not run. After my animals ran a little with his, mine arrived first. It is thus that I saw his were less strong."

[541] The present competition among the curers to assert their power by telling such stories or by displaying fearlessness in the bullfights held in community fiestas is symptomatic of the disruption caused by the breakdown in the hierarchy of the profession. When curing was a controlled profession, abusive conduct by the curers was minimized, but the new curers are reputed to use their power for their own gain. The following story is typical:

> 756 539 J, born in Tetikil, went to live in hot country. A friend invited him to drink. J, who was reputed to be a curer, said to his friend when they were half drunk, "Do you want to 'take out' a girl?" His friend said, "No, how can you?" "*Pendejo!*" J replied, "I can because I have an animal

756 [swayohel]." "What one?" asked his friend. "You
539 won't be afraid?" asked J. And then he put his shirt
and hat on the floor, spoke three words (my
friend didn't say what), and raised his hat and
shirt, and a horse appeared. He did this again and
a bull appeared. He was a great *?ak'čamel* [witch].
[682] He stole a great deal. He was killed by five bullets.

756 Such stories of curers "who walk on both
sides" (*šbe?en ta ča mehč*) are favorites in the
[152] drinking sessions of Teklum. The power of
curers inspires fear, so much so that some of
the town presidents have been afraid of putting
them in prison.

The open competition between curers serves
756 to undermine the faith of the people in their
776 guardianship function. This function was
believed to have been acquired by the leaders
[133] from the *me?tiktatik*, the ancestors, who were
said to live in a cave in a hill near the town,
[769] from which came the progenitors of the
present townspeople. To carry out this guardianship
function, the animal spirits of the two
leading curers roamed the streets at night,
when the evil spirits were out, each one remaining
within the limits of his own side of the
dual division. In this role, the two major
curers were called the *me?iltatiletik*, a term
derived from the one referring to the ancestors.

178 The loss of faith in the guardianship function
776 of the curers was coincident with the loss
756 of belief in the presence of the me?tiktatik.
Some deny that the me?tiktatik live in the cave
769 anymore, and others say they just appear on
[796] the day of their fiesta, the Day of the Cross in
the Catholic calendar. This fiesta formerly was
796 an important event in establishing the guardian
776 power of the leader curers, since they were
756 the only ones who dared enter the cave and
talk to the ancestors. But this fear and this
178 belief have gone. In 1960 one young man of
769 the pueblo entered the cave on the day of the
fiesta, when the curers were "deceiving the
people" in claiming that they were talking to
the ancestors; the fact that he dared enter the
cave indicates an ambient distrust (in part
resulting from verbal attacks by the priest,
who at that time was gaining more power in
[794] the town). By now, on the Day of the Cross
the church and civil officials, the women
[793] prayermakers, and an assistant of the priest,
the *fiscal*, go to the cave, but the curers are no
178 longer present, even as bystanders. The
756 curers have tried to buttress belief in the
guardianship of the ancestors by claiming that
769 a nephew of the ancestors is now in residence in

178 756 769 the cave and that they are in communication with him. But these claims are met with expressions of disbelief by the people. Almost everyone is convinced not only that the curers do not now talk with the ancestors, but that the ancestors no longer look over them from the watchout hill outside their cave.

756 178 731 [273] [682] The loss of control by the curers is dramatized in the long passage quoted above contrasting the past and present treatment of epidemics. Formerly the two leaders of the curers consulted together and announced to the president that they had rid the town of evil. Now the curers as a group are ordered to come before the civil authority. There, in a long examination called *ʔiʼ yoʔtan*—"taking the heart"—in which 18 liters of liquor are consumed, the assembled curers and civil authorities decide who among them is responsible for bringing in the witchcraft that is causing the epidemic. Later in the evening, one of the curers is usually killed (cases 11 and 29, Table 1).

756 578 (2) *Conflict between the curers and the civil authority.* The competition between the curers and the civil authority can be traced in a series of incidents beginning in the '30's and culminating in an open confrontation in the spring of 1966.

756 578 682 The first incident occurred in 1932, when the town was still part of the neighboring Ladino township:

683 [632]

> F went and asked permission of the authorities to kill his enemy, a curer, who he thought was bewitching his brother-in-law. The president went to the house of the suspected witch with the order to imprison him. He said they were going to take him to the neighboring township center to put him in jail. The group of authorities set off with the suspected witch. On the way, another group met them and asked them where they were going. The president replied, "To H." The group that had encountered them asked if they would like a drink to heat their body. They gave one cup, and then another. Then they cut up the suspected witch with a machete and put his body in the cave of the ancestors. When the widow enquired the next day where her husband was, the president said that the man must have gone to the finca.

The ambush by the killers was prearranged in the town court, and the president covered their deed when questions were asked.

[622] In 1940, the leading curer of the lower section was president. When he killed a man who

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578
682 accused him of being a witch, he was put in
683 the local jail by the judge and then removed to
756 the departmental capital. During his term of
754 imprisonment an epidemic broke out in the
682 town; it was attributed to witchcraft supposedly
practiced by him and by two other
683 curers who remained in town. These two were
578 then imprisoned. After they were set free, all
three men were killed in different episodes involving
accusations of witchcraft. Permission
to act as executioners was granted by the
civil authority.

• 178 In the past, the public review of a case before
682 a killing probably served to minimize homicide,
since permission was not always granted.
754 Since 1953, when a large highway first linked
627 the town to the departmental capital and
communication between this center of justice
[491] and the local township increased, the civil authority
has not given permission, and prior
review of witchcraft cases occurs only with
epidemics.

756 The final incident in which the civil authority
754 confronted the curers occurred in the spring
578 of 1966. The president accused one of the
curers of cutting short his life by lighting
627 candles in the mountains. The curers were
called together to hear the threat and to go to
the hill to look at the evidence. The accused
curer remained at home pleading that he was
sick. He was warned not to pursue his witchcraft,
and as yet there has been no use of
[178] violence on either side. This open confrontation
without the use of violence may indicate a
[622] change in the strategy of conflict with the
growing power of the president.

756 (3) *Breakdown of the dual division.* The loss
of internal controls in the curing profession
178 and the conflict for power and control by the
578 civil officials and the curers are related to a
621 more fundamental change in the social structure
of the community. Formerly the division
626 of the town into two sections provided a channel
for opposition as well as cooperation. Recruitment
into leadership positions in both the
civil hierarchy and the curing hierarchy was
based upon residence. The system provided
checks and balances in the exercise of power,
for the two principales—one from each section
of the dual division—were supposed to act as
watchdogs over the curers. The shift in the
locus of social control from the principales to
the president has been marked by the open
confrontation with the curers.

000 The authority of the president, however,

[P. 469-A]

682 wider ranges of expression than are usually
183 permitted in the community prompt men to
assert the strength of their swayohel, to run
ráces with the animal spirits of others in the
assertion of pre-eminence, to boast of their
material goods, and to "wake up dead."

682 The increasing rate of homicide is related to
674 the following changes in the community:

● 178 (1) Increasing friction resulting both from the
578 introduction of new economic enterprises
and from political competition by the
recently settled land-reform colonies has
introduced a new kind of homicide, in
which an opponent is killed either by the
person whose interests are threatened or
[754] by hired killers. It has also stimulated
accusations of witchcraft stemming from
558 envy.

682 (2) The curers' loss of leadership and of con-
674 trol over entry into the curing profession
178 has led to competition among them and to
528 a loss of respect for their ability to over-
756 come witchcraft. Curers have become the
most frequent suspects of being witches.

754 (3) Loss of faith in the guardian ancestors and
in the guardianship functions acquired
682 from them by the curers has further under-
674 mined the position of the curers as agents
178 of social control. This has aggravated the
769 sense of insecurity and fear, which pro-
776 vokes the uncontrolled use of individual
626 violence.

(4) The shift of power from the principales to
682 the town president has led to a breakdown
674 in the system of checks and balances
178 exerted by the principales over the curers,
621 and to a direct confrontation of the curers
by civil officials.

626 (5) In the confrontations of the civil authori-
756 ties and the curers in the '40's and early
'50's, the fact that a witchcraft case was
682 officially reviewed and the killing of the
674 witch sanctioned may have served as a
756 brake on the number of such homicides.
178 Since 1953, when this practice was aban-
626 doned, those who have felt themselves or
their families to be the victims of witch-
683 craft have been left to their own recourse.

178 The organizational changes summarized
here are provoked by structural changes
578 affecting recruitment into the positions of
682 power and the validation of leadership in the
exercise of power. The dual division of the
[621] town provided an accepted basis for recruiting
[632]
[756]

[P.469-B]

178 leaders, both in the civil authority and in the
578 curing profession. The transition from the old
682 hierarchy of control to the new leadership
621 structure is still in process. In the most recent
632 confrontation of the civil authority and curers,
756 the fact that neither side resorted to violence
suggests the transitional nature of homicide
as a solution in intracommunal conflict.

178 This study of homicide indicates that the
682 changing rate of behavior points to structural
change, but does not in itself indicate what
kind of change occurs or from what motives
[121] it stems. Qualitative case analysis related to
structural changes within the recall of informants is essential for understanding social process.

NOTES

114 122 128 [1] Field work is based on two periods of residence in the community in 1964 and 1965; it was supported by the National Institute of Mental Health. I am grateful for comments by Paul Friedrich, Richard Henderson, Harold Scheffler, and Peter Wilson, who have improved the original version read at the 1965 meetings of the American Anthropological Association. I remain responsible for the contents of the paper.

114 682 762 [2] Henry and Short (1954:18) analyze both suicide and homicide as undifferentiated aggressive reactions to frustration, the rates of which vary—in the first case inversely and in the second case directly—with the strength of the external control system over behavior. Their assumption that homicide is motivationally a single phenomenon, and not an expression of a variety of motives, stems from the assumption that all cases of aggressive acts are the result of frustration. Straus and Straus (1964:587) apply a similar correlational analysis of homicide and suicide rates with structural features of society in Ceylon, but come to opposite conclusions. They maintain that one would expect greater evidence of homicide in a "loosely structured society," by which they mean one with considerable sanctioning of variation in individual behavior. These studies contradict each other in the conclusions that they reach by similar analytical processes, but they are attempts to move away from such psychoanalytic reasoning as the death-wish theory.

128 682 [3] Bohannan's (1960) survey of homicide and suicide in African societies represents a useful model for comparing the total pattern of homicide cross-culturally. In presenting the case material here, I have used a similar format, adding to it the circumstances surrounding the killing. In the analysis of these materials, I have diverged from Bohannan's model in trying to demonstrate the linkage among the components—the ratios, to use Burke's (1945) terminology of scene/setting/actor/agent.

192 754 756 [4] The term "witch" is a translation of the Tzeltal term *ʔak'-čamel*, literally "giver of sickness." The term "curer" is a translation of *ʔaʔal*. The power to cure and to give sickness stems from the possession of a *ʔwayohel*, or animal spirit.

000 [5] For a discussion of the tactics of gaining consensus in witch-killings, see Manning Nash (1960).

578 423 668 682 [6] Political homicide by agrarian leaders, which is so frequent in the central plateau (Friedrich 1962), is a relatively recent phenomenon in the retreat zones of Indian population. The cases analyzed by Friedrich are a strategy of political power stemming from a revolutionary background, and the cultural assumptions to which he points contrast with those underlying witch-killings. My only comparable case is, significantly, found outside the traditional center, in the new ejido colony

000 [7] Jules Henry (1936) sees the formula of fear and anger as the

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177
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797 The mistakes, lack of attention and pretensions of the Indians in regard to the Christian doctrine, who they say they know, and the ones instructed best in them, say as many heretic words as Christian, is consequence or necessary sequel of the lack of care in the secular and ecclesiastical government.

This situation became more and more acute owing largely to the political unrest which absorbed the attention of the authorities, unrest which culminated in the separation of Chiapas from Guatemala and in 1824 its incorporation with Mexico.

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177
648 The next period, *invasion of lands by Ladinos*, extends from about 1850 to 1911. when the first sparks of the Mexican Revolution reached Chiapas. In this period Ladinos began to invade lands of the Indian communities by bribery or by force. Toward 1856 the Indians complained against the invasion of lands in San Martin, San Miguel Mitontic, San Pedro Chenalo, Cuncuc, and Tenejapa, but failed to halt Ladino inroads (Trens, 1942, pp. 274–75).

[178] The history of recent times, from 1920 on, is marked by increasing support from federal authorities throughout the entire republic. In the Tzeltal area progress has been slow but constantly improving (see LaFarge, 1940; Beals, 1951).

Ethnographic Studies of the Region

114
[101] In his first trip through the Mayance area in 1839 and 1840, Stephens (1841) visited the northern zone of the Tzeltal, from Ocosingo to Yajalon, going through Bachajon and Chilon.

Traveling the same route two decades later in the opposite direction, the French explorer Désiré Charnay recorded his impressions in a small book (1863).

In 1901 Frederick Starr (1902), from the University of Chicago, made a short visit to the region.

In 1925 Blom and LaFarge traversed from north to south a large part of Tzeltal territory, publishing their data in three chapters of their *Tribes and Temples* (1926–

[P. 198-B]

162 Amatenango del Valle, a community of
2,529 inhabitants, of which 1,470 reside in
the town center.

621 The town centers are divided into two
sections, called barrios by Ladinos and cal-
pules by Indians (Oxchuc and Cancuc).
The imaginary line which separates one
barrio from another passes through the cen-
ter of the town, sometimes east-west, some-
times north-south, with no fixed orientation.

[776] Each barrio has its own local authorities
and sometimes its own patron saint (Ox-
chuc and Bachajon). The principal func-
tion of the barrios was not only political or
religious but also social, in regulating mar-
[178] riage. Endogamy was common to all bar-
rios, but today that rule is losing its rigidity.
In Aguacatenango, B. Metzger (1960, p. 8)
tells us that, "The rule of barrio endogamy,
which is viable in 86% of the known mar-
riages, contributes to the localization of
related families limiting the geographical
range of marriage choice." A similar situa-
tion obtains in Amatenango (J. Nash, 1959,
p. 3), Cancuc (Guiteras Holmes, 1947, p.
7), and Bachajon (Guiteras Holmes, 1961c,
p. 167).

[178] In Bachajon, Guiteras Holmes states that:
"In the old days there was no marriage be-
[578] tween the *barrios*. If a boy from San Sebas-
tian took a walk through San Geronimo, he
was beaten; they would give him a '*maciza*,'
as they say. If a boy from a *barrio* ap-
proached the waterholes to court a girl, he
fared very badly." The calpules of Oxchuc,
although they have politico-religious signifi-
cance, have no influence at all in the selec-
tion of wives.

621 The parajes have a few scattered huts
778 among the cultivated fields. Each paraje is
[361] bound by religious ties to a given cave
where a cross, the supreme sacred symbol,
is kept. The name of the paraje is generally
778 taken from the name of the cave. Sacred
821 caves of secondary importance also exist.
823 This mystical regard for caves is based in
the belief that they are the place from
which issues the lightning to punish the

[P 205-A]

000 ponerles sus mojones y a darles al posesión que les corresponde segun el número de ellos.

"Donde principió parar primer mojón *Busulton Pacton* que está en el camino derecho; 2° mojón *Oxloton* que está en el camino; 3er. mojón *Tzovilton*; 4° mojón *Tequelton*, mojón con Pedro Moreno; 5° mojón *Yolilnelej Lomchen*; 6° mojón de acuerdo con Juan Gómez Bet y Martin Sanchez Chelap se llama la raya *Teguel Canté* que es también la raya con Manuel Chimbak; 7° mojón *Tequelton* raya única con Marcos Hernandez López y Diego López y Diego Giron Vázquez; 8° mojón y último *Basulton Pacton*.

"Habiendo quedado todos los vecinos colindantes contentos, ofreciendo ambos que en lo sucesive no tendrán el menor disgusto, pues, son nativos de su propio pueblo, bajo el concepto que si alguno delinquiese en trastornar el orden en que han quedado, el agraviado lo pondrá en conocimiento del Juez para aberiguarlo y aplicarle la pena que merezca, para acuya seguridad son testigos Lorenzo Ichilok, Martin Solel, Miguel Gómez Ichilok y Gobernadores Diego Méndez Chizna y Nicolas Jiménez Acux. Por los testigos y Gobernadores que no saben firmar. Abril 12 de 1861 y como testigo y escribano Alonso Santis.

423 The descendants of the Gómez Ichiloks
613 still live in the same paraje of Tzajalchen
614 and share the same parcel. In other lineages
the original parcel was subdivided on agree-
● [178] ment between the interested parties. In this
way single individuals now own pieces of
land, a type of property ownership that is
becoming more general as the old social
organization based on clans and lineages
gradually breaks up.

423 The parcels can be rented to people of
427 other lineages and of other communities.
Often the Tzeltal of Oxchuc rent their par-
cels to natives from Tenejapa or Cancuc
[613] who are their immediate neighbors. Pay-
[614] ment, made with food, chicha, and money,
must be shared by the most important mem-
bers of the same clan other than the ones
of the same lineage (Villa Rojas, 1947, ch.
19).

[P 211-B]

614 613 exception, both names (lineage and clan) are inherited from the father.

● [178] [612] In the more acculturated communities the clan and lineage system tends to disappear and to be replaced by the bilateral system, [582] characteristic of Ladino society. In Aguacatenango, despite the belief that there is a relationship between people of the same 613 Spanish name, they may marry. Moreover, they are starting to be ashamed of using the indigenous name, differentiating the lineages. B. Metzger states (1959/p. 18):

> [551] Lineage names appear to be used as surnames within the community—as we have discovered

[P 214-B]

776 796 This substitute is called *gelol*, the same image but smaller, which is kept next the original one.

[788] [782] [533] During the procession the saint is carried in a litter. Incense is burned before him, while music with drums and flutes is played.

Traditional Ceremonies

796 [177] [178] There are other ceremonies held in the parajes which, although based on Christian ritual (including some of the prayers, presence of the cross, candles, etc.), still manifest ancient aboriginal traditions. [776] Among these ceremonies is the one made before the house altar to Chulmetic (the earth goddess), to God, to Tatik Jesucristo and the 13 Fiadores del Cielo, for the soul of one newborn, to guard against sicknesses or bad influences of any kind. This ceremony is

[P. 222-C]

We have divided Maya history in two groups, the Old Empire 175
and the New Empire. Of the history of the New Empire we know 174
a considerable amount, but our knowledge of the Old Empire history is scant. We know the area in which it flourished as a whole, like knowing Greece without being aware of Sparta, Athens, and Corinth. Here in front of me lay one of the first hints of the subdivisions of the Old Empire. Knowledge will advance, and soon we shall be able to tell about the rise and decline of states and cities, to revive the history of the foremost people of ancient America.

Nearly due north across the valley lies the Campomtik pyramid. 172
La Farge visited it while we worked at Toniná. It, too, is a re- 133
modeled mountain top, and as it is covered with grass, it stands out 778
sharply against the forest-clad hills. It consists of a series of terraces with a depression which has stone-faced terraces and floor. From the valley bottom the hill rises 280 meters, of which 105 meters (325 feet) have been terraced. Broken pottery is found in various places on the hillside, and on the top now stands two wooden
crosses, set there by the Indians. The name Campomtik means [103]
"much yellow incense." Incense was burned on the hilltop until [782]
quite recently. At such times they burned great fires, and shot off [796]
many rockets bought in Ocosingo. Finally the celebrations got too [177]
fervent for the Catholic Father, and he had the Indians driven away
by the town officials. Generally, though, the Padres let the Indians [178]
alone when they celebrate in honour of the ancient gods (fig. 201).

Outside Ocosingo, where the trail divides, one going to Bachajon, 172
the other to Sivacá, lies a group of mounds called Santa Teresa. Rumors that Indains had buried church treasures here after an uprising, led the townspeople to make a large excavation. According to some people in Ocosingo, they found a small wooden sanctuary, and a beautiful clay bowl with a fish on its lid. This bowl later was bought by Seler.*

It is remarkable how persistent are rumors of buried treasures. 123
Every Ladino expects to find "dinero," money, in any mound, and 172
they are usually sadly disappointed. Also, most of these people believe that we find money, else why should we dedicate so much time to our explorations? We had a case where one man offered to go fifty-fifty with us if we would explore a mound on his lands. The whole mound at Santa Teresa has been dug through, and it is told in Ocosingo that the excavators found, not money, but a small wooden sanctuary with a saint inside. We hear every day, when among the Ladinos and Mexicans, stories of church bells of solid gold, and cocks that crow at midnight on top of the mounds.

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*Seler, E., 1901. Fig. 278.

648 mate butt of any joke, contemptible, and with no inherent rights. The native ceremonies and beliefs, even when closely parallel to their own, are considered mere ignorant superstitions. Only what is definitely Catholic is respected. Small shrines may be desecrated at will. Behind all this, mindful of past uprisings, lies a certain amount of definite fear of the subject people. There are, of course, many exceptions, especially among the more intelligent ranchers who from their patriarchal position or intimate relations have come to understand the natives as human beings.

Fig. [illegible]—El Real, Chis. Tzeltal girls.

829 The effect of all this on the
Indian is suspicion of the ruling
class, reluctance to impart information,
distrust of friendly
overtures. If one hails an Indian
in the streets of a town, he
will frequently run away. Once
convinced, however, that an individual
actually likes them, and
is genuinely interested in them,
their response is warm. We received
[123] many small favours and
acts of friendship in notoriously
hostile villages.

241 In their culture these people
[181] belong to the general type characteristic
of all Southern Mexico
and at least the nearer parts
of Guatemala. They depend
[433] primarily upon farming for
their livelihood, with corn as the
[291] staple crop. Calabashes, melons,
[301] beans, tobacco, bananas, and cotton
[302] are raised. The farming is
carried on by the same wasteful
"milpa system" that has been described in Chapter XI, the old
[178] Maya method that was eventually responsible for the abandonment
[166] of many cities. In the case of the Bachajon, it has already become
one cause for deserting their villages. The chief food is dried corn
262 boiled with lime and ground by the women on the stone metates
252 which were described in dealing with the Indians of San Martín
Pajapa. It then may be baked on a flat griddle, making tortillas,
411 or kept to drink with water as *posole*. The one universal tool and
412 weapon is the machete, varying in form from tribe to tribe, but al-
184 ways made by Collins & Co., of Hartford—part of one of the most
177 amazing industries in the world.

tied by a string carried down to an arched stick, H, stuck in the 224
ground. This string, by holding down the far ends, counterbalances the weight of the fall at the other ends. At the end of the string the cross-stick, D, holds it against the arch; it, in turn, is held by the trigger, C, one end of which braces against it, the other end against the far side of the trap, passing under the deadfall. A circular fence of sticks prevents an animal from getting at the outer part of the trap. A straight fence on the other side of the fall necessitates its entering through the entrance, AA, to get at the bait, B, on the trigger. The animal dislodges the trigger, releasing D and with it the string. The outer ends of the sticks fly up, and the weighted log falls. In the rat trap, the log and stones came to at least three kilograms, arranged to fall through a space of about ten centimeters, other traps being in proportion.

When hunting with a gun, a red fruit called *ahoon* is frequently [824]
rubbed on the shot, and *palma bendita, tcul-tĕc-wil can,* the palm used in church decorations, is used for the wad. This prevents the bullet "from getting tired" before it reaches its mark.

Meat obtained while hunting, if it cannot be carried immediately 251
to the house, is dried on a rack, *tcax*.

The primary method of carrying goods of all kinds is by the 482
tump-line, for which, as has been said in the discussion of physical and other characteristics, these people are very well adapted. The tump-line, *pak,* is a broad strip of inner bark, or of cow-hide. For their ordinary uses, this is a single strip, the ends being attached to a net (q. v.) of their own manufacture. When a package too bulky for the net is carried, a long strap is used with the ends tied together. This is looped through itself, around the package, so that it hangs in two slings. Additional straps may be attached to the line where it passes over the ears, to wrap around the sides of the burden. A flat piece of cowhide, *tcokHax,* is worn against the back, to protect the carrier from the chafing of his load. Both men and women use the tump-line, the carrying of objects on the head being unusual.

Formerly the Indians of this district are said to have owned a 492
good many mules and horses for packing, which they lost during [178]
the recent political disturbances. Many of them know something
about packing. At present, however, few if any own cattle of any
kind.

The highland rivers do not, on the whole, lend themselves to 487
water travel, although the Bachajon territory reaches to the Bascan,
Tulija, and other more amenable water-ways. Canoes are known only 501
as introductions of German or Ladino ranchers. The natives use a [177]

he is whipped by the girl's father for a thief. The girl is stripped to 584
the waist and whipped by her mother. With this the marriage is 585
legalized. As the first act of their true married life, the girl makes posole and offers it to her parents. The boy is under obligation to bring presents of bread, chocolate, aguardiente, etc., to his parents-in-law.

There are no formal restrictions of marriage, but the Church 582
exercises a general influence against wedding brother and sister, 177
cousins, or other relatives forbidden by Christian doctrine. In this, 178
owing to the disposition of the Indians, and to the purely tribal character of marriage, which is not regarded by them as a religious or governmental matter, the Church is only partially successful. In- 588
formal unions actually do occur between brother and sister, apparently without any ceremony, the pair merely continuing to live together, their family relationship slowly changing into that of a married couple. That such a wife's status has some regularity in their eyes is shown by the fact that she has the same position in funeral rites as an ordinary wife.

It is probably due to the negative influence of the Church that 115
the various important crises in the life of an individual, ordinarily 126
marked by such colourful ceremonies among primitive people, here are distinguished by very little of ritualistic observance. For description of the main events in the life course, we were again dependent on Señor Tovilla, whose information, given with little change below, checked entirely with the result of other inquiries. The funeral ceremonies were observed at first hand, after the fight described at El Encanto; for them, accordingly, I have used my own notes.

When a woman is about to give birth to a child, a midwife—an 844
older woman with some knowledge of herbs—is summoned. A few days before parturition, the woman is carefully tended by the midwife, well fed with choice food, and provided with a little rum. At the moment of giving birth, the midwife prays that the child may be brought forth happily. The mother kneels, and the midwife prepares to receive the child with a new cloth. Meantime the father is told to stay outside the house, or may be allowed to help in minor matters.

It is said that at Tenejapa the women go out into the woods to give birth untended, coming back with the child.

The baby is given Christian baptism. 852

A child's soul is considered to be particularly delicate, and there- 789
fore liable to magic influence. If the people of the house must go [774]

village. In common with all ceremonial celebrations, these fiestas 796
are called *k'in*, the old Maya word for "sun." Even non-Christian elements appear in the fiestas. The Bachajon call their chief fiesta, St. Jerome's Day, May 13th, *kan-k'in*, "yellow sun," an old Maya month name.

On many points one cannot say whether the ritual be Christian 771
or not; the use of the cross is such a point. The Mayas had a cross,* 177
the worship of which was encouraged by the early Padres, while 178 •
teaching the Indians to associate with it Christian ideas. Certain 778
it is that crosses now play a greater part in Indian than in Ladino religion. They are maintained on the roads at partings of the way and crests of hills, and they are used in ceremonies that have little or nothing to do with the Church. Crosses by the road are usually covered with offerings of flowers and pine tips; in the houses they are decorated with any bits of bright paper, flowers, or pictures that can be obtained. The house-altars seem to be more truly Christian, as is indicated by the names, *altar, tcun tat-ik,* "altar of our Holy Father," and *cruz tcun tat-ik,* "cross of our Holy Father," in both of which the most important word is Spanish. At the house by El Encanto we had a chance to observe one such altar at leisure (fig. 309). It consisted of a neatly made cross, 75 centimeters high, standing above a small and rickety table. About the cross were fir branches, brought down from the highlands, and it was hung with cacao beans and small yellow gourds. A revenue stamp pasted across it gave a touch of more vivid green. The wall behind was entirely covered by a sheet of an old news-

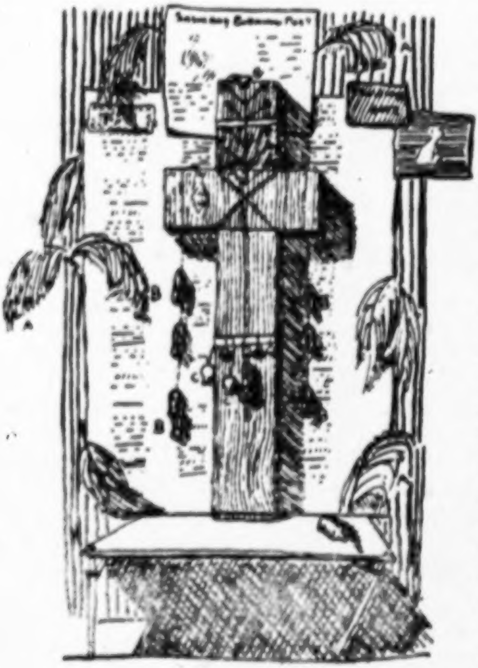

Fig. 309—El Encanto, Chis. Altar in House.

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*Cf. Tozzer, 1907, Page 131 ff.

778 paper, brightened with colour added by a cigarette package, a label
from a tin of beets in a deep red, a joke in German about the fall
of the mark, of which the prevailing tone was pure viridian, and a
page of advertising from the Saturday Evening Post. We gave
[123] this family a chromo of a saint, which was immediately framed
with a sort of wooden box, and set up beside the cross. The table
below was used for laying odds and ends on, such as the spindle and
a couple of empty aguardiente bottles.

782 Incense, *pom*, and candles, both extensively used by the Indians
788 today, had a place in the old Maya ritual similar to that of the
177 Catholic Church.
178

The Priest is an important figure to the Indians. They come to
793 him with respect to tell him their troubles, and receive him into their
villages with rejoicing. At the same time, there is no doubt that
they deliberately hoodwink him as to the orthodoxy of their faith.

796 Although it includes several non-Christian elements, a description of the fiesta observed at Tecojá will give a fair idea of the
Tzeltal's church observances. Tecojá ranch has a village of about
[241] twenty houses attached to it. The fiesta was held on the twenty-
[648] second and twenty-third of June. By custom, the ranch had to
allow the Indians this time off, as well as accepting the lowered efficiency on the following "cold grey dawn of the morning after."
The owners had, moreover, to provide the rum for the whole celebration, in this case, two demi-johns.

The ranch chapel was thrown open and decorated with fir
[794] branches and streamers. The proceedings were in charge of two
older men, called *caporales*, who were distinguished by a cross-belting of red handkerchiefs. One house was set aside for the celebrations, in front of which was a table and three triangular, crimson
banners with gold edges. By these drumming and flute-playing
went on irregularly. Here was the official dispensary for rum,
which was given out by the *caporales*. Inside the house, a palm-thatched one with stick walls, about fifteen feet square, some thirty
[534] Indians, men and women, were squatting against the walls. There
was an orchestra of a guitar and a mouth-organ, occasionally augmented by the piper, who would wander in from outside. This individual, although most amazingly drunk, managed to maintain his
[533] musical ability until he fell asleep. The tune they played was like
a rather wistful jig, but the time was lively. To this four couples
[535] danced, the men facing the women, with a shuffling step not unlike
waltzing. They kept very much in one place, but occasionally
changed sides. The dancing was evidently a serious affair. This
type is called in Spanish *zapatea*, in Tzeltal, *ahk'Out*.

The performance continued until late that night and began again 796
the next morning. Later in the day the banners were carried to the
chapel in procession, with music, and deposited by the altar. The [794]
caporales led in prayer. The fiesta went on again in the evening.

Christian forms are applied to or mixed with non-Christian rites 771
and ideas to some extent, a confusion resembling the appeal to both 172
saints and native gods in prayer among tribes of Guatemala* and 178
British Honduras.† Much of Christianity is adapted to conform 171
to old, fundamental native concepts.

In the church at Bachajon Village there are fourteen saints beside the tribal patron, St. Jerome. These others each have a special care, as the cornfield, hunting, the rivers, etc., and are prayed to for help in their particular provinces. They are given gifts of cloth, usually red or blue, which is draped about them. Many of them duplicate the functions of non-Christian "guardians," to be described below. 776

In this connection it may be mentioned that the Zotzil-speaking Indians of Huistan are accustomed to beat their saint (St. Martin) when they have a bad year, and to caress him and anoint him with oil when things go well. We were told that he had lost his nose and both ears due to this practice. [171]

One prayer was dictated to us by Señor Cruz at Toniná, the full 126
text of which is given in Appendix VI, Text I. It is primarily 782
meant for a poor man when making his offering in the cornfield, a 196
use which is indicated by the phrase "health of the earth," but it may also be used in church. The phrase "blood of my flesh" suggests a remniscence of the ancient Maya offerings of blood from the ear, tongue, etc. A free translation is given here.

PRAYER OF A POOR MAN WHO HAS NOT MUCH TO OFFER.

"Do Thou accept, in the name of our protector God of the blessed land, what I have gained, and what I have not gained. Do Thou forgive, in the name of our protector God of the blessed land, blood of our flesh; our hearts are open, our lips are open. Give health of the earth; protect thy son kneeling here." [539]

Of primary interest to us were the survivals of the old worship. 771
At the time of the Conquest the Spaniards put forth their utmost 178
efforts to suppress the native religion, and the process has gone on 177

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*Sapper, 1925.
†Gann, 1918.

771 spasmodically ever since. The temples and idols were overthrown,
178 the theocracy, that knew the lore and could read the books, was
177 killed off or reduced to the common level. The books themselves
have vanished. At the same time, churches were built, and Christianity preached with a fine enthusiasm. Later, idols whenever discovered were destroyed, and all forms of heathenism vigourously opposed. This process has continued for some four hundred years. In other places less than half that time has sufficed to wipe out every vestige of an old cult, but here, not only had the Padres to deal with a race at least semi-civilized, supporting a sophisticated religion, but a people of remarkable, tenacious conservatism, and who, moreover, at all times have outnumbered their conquerors.

It must be borne in mind that the highly evolved, elaborate old-time religion could only be maintained in its purity by an educated people, men who could philosophize, study history, and read the stars with scientific accuracy. Obviously, what survives can only be in a simplified and debased form.

778 Most directly religious are certain places of worship retained by
178 the Indians. The old Mayas are known to have used, of course, caves as well as their mounds and temples. Nuñez de la Vega* tells of such worship going on in his time, and according to Sapper† it continues in Guatemala today.

In Ocosingo Valley, the pyramids of Cololté (*kolol-te,* a kind of tree), Chakalchib (*cakaltcip',* translation not known), and Campomtik (*kan,* "yellow," *pom,* "incense," *-čtik,* "much"), have been mentioned in the last chapter. They are all prehistoric places of worship. Their use by the Indians has been continued into modern times.

On top of Cololté the almost completely disfigured idol has already been described. It is decked with fir branches, and fir tips have been laid about its base. Before it in an arc stand wooden sticks to hold candles. The Indians do not come here at set periods as is usual elsewhere, but only when there is great need of rain.

Campomtik, across from Cololté, was used annually until a short time ago. Their celebrations made so much uproar that finally a local Priest had them driven away, and the worship there has been discontinued. There is still a big, rotting cross set up on top, but there are no offerings or candlesticks.

Behind Ocosingo, Chakalchib is still a place of worship, where fiestas are held annually without benefit of clergy. A large pile of stone in the center of the platform supports one cross about the

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*Nuñez de la Vega, 1702.
†Sapper, 1925.

height of a man, and several other smaller ones in more or less disrepair. On the northeast side is a fireplace. There are a few candlesticks, some with traces of wax in them. Fir branches and tips, mostly withered, were piled so deeply as to indicate several years' deposits. According to description, Indians come here from far and near, to dance and drink as at any ceremony. 778 178

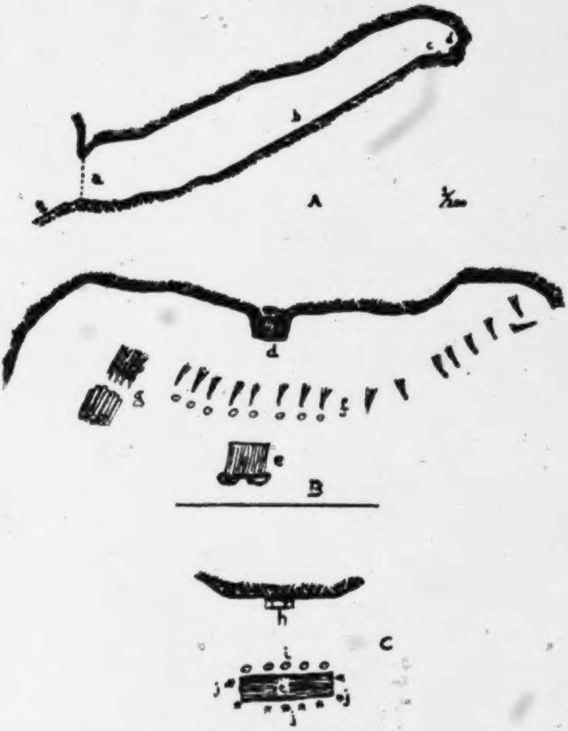

FIG. 310—Chacalchib, Chis. Altars.

A. Section of cave.
a. Sleeping place.
b. Ascent.
c. Level place.
d. Projection of rock.
B. Plan of Altar.
e. Board for incense.
f. Pine tips and candle sticks.
g. Reserve pile of pine tips and candle sticks.
C. Plan of Second Altar.
h. Cross.
i. Candle sticks.
j. Pine tips set on end.

More interesting than the top of the mound were two caves in its side, formed by the natural hollowing out of limestone outcrops near its base. The first of these had a small entrance, not high enough to stand up in, and just about large enough to give room for the grass bed and fire of which we found traces (fig. 310 a, b). From there the cave went up a few meters, and divided. The

778 • 178 left-hand fork ended shortly. The right-hand one went on to a small level place, on which about four people could squat at once. The roof was too low to stand. In the end wall a block of rock about half a meter high and twenty centimeters broad stuck out. In front of it were eight small candlesticks in a row, a neat bundle of fir tips laid before each. More of these extended in an arc to the right, and there was a pile of spare tips and candlesticks at one side. Behind this was a square of bark resting on two stones, which showed signs of having had incense burned on it.

The second cave was more open, more of a room, high, and broken with pillars of limestone and dirt. It was caused partly by hollowing out limestone through the action of water, and partly by washing out the soil. In a quite open situation a small, square cross was leant against a rock. There was a flat board for incense, with five candlesticks on the side of the cross, and fir tips around the other three sides (see fig. 310 c).

These two caves, whether or not they were used in pre-Conquest days, do definitely represent the survival of a purely non-Christian manner of worship.

The general attitude of the Indians towards all the carvings of the Old People is not without interest. While they appear to attach no particular significance to the temples, they call all idols by the generic term of "santo." Thus the fine bas-relief found near San José Reforma, told of in the last chapter, was known to the natives as *Santo Ton*, "Saint Stone," or "Holy Stone."

782 Distinct from worship at these archaeological sites are the offerings made to the "guardian," *yaHwal*, of the cornfields, a pure old Maya rite carried on in the modern fields. This is purely family matter, at which the head of the family officiates. A cross is set up, *atole* or *cocoposole* (*posole* with cocoa and sugar) and rum are offered in bowls, candles and incense are burned, and a chicken killed. The prayer quoted on page 365 is recited at this time. The offerings are only made at the time of planting the *milpa* in the spring, and suffice also for the fall *tonamil*. As nearly as we could find out, each field has its particular guardian, an idea which was shown by the case, to be described later when speaking of magic, of a man who took steps to gain the consent of a field's guardian before putting a curse on it.

776 [823] There is a guardian of the river, *yabahen*, and of the mountains, *hun ahau*. This last is of particular interest, correponding as it does with the old Maya day-name signifying chief. Hun Ahau is mentioned in Landa, page 200, edition of 1864, as ruler of Mitamnal or hell. As Hunahpu he may be referred to in the Popol Vuh. Two

796 178 However, much hinges on the difficult question of whether or not they still possess the old calendar, without which the divination would be impossible. This will be spoken of again. On the whole, the Tzeltal do not show anything like the robust survivals of old religion that are found in Guatemala; in this respect, also, they have retained only a degenerated form.

776 756 Concerning the attitude of the Indian towards his *nagual,* two stories may be told that have a certain interest. The first is an incident which occurred to us at Cacate-el, the ranch of Señor Tovilla in the Bachajon country. A Bachajon came in to complain that another Indian was casting spells on his fields and chickens. The other had taken a piece of dirt from his cornfield, so as "to gain consent of the guardian" (see above). He was making the corn wither and the chickens die. His power lay in his *nagual,* a *leon colorado* (*saxal-tcoq*), the most powerful that one can have. The Indian who [123] complained had some much weaker familiar. We gave him a brilliant chromo of Saint Jerome with his lion; not only because St. Jerome is the patron of the Bachajon, but also because of the lion, obviously to him the Saint's *nagual,* which anyone could see was larger and more powerful than any known to the Indians. With this picture set up in his house, he felt that he could rest in safety.

Señor Tovilla also passed on to us a story told him for true by an educated and trustworthy upper-class Mexican, an *abogado* (somewhat corresponding to the English solicitor). It is interesting for showing what is commonly believed even by the European people, although somewhat hard to accept. This man stopped at a Bachajon house, wherein he saw two old men sitting with their backs to each other, and two dogs fighting furiously on the floor. When he asked why they did not stop the fight, one of them answered:

"Our *naguales* are in those dogs, and my friend (*sic*) and I are fighting."

He went on to relate that, after the dogs gave up from exhaustion, both the men's faces were covered with black and blue marks.

[829] The Indians and their medicine men have succeeded to a remarkable degree in impressing the Ladinos with the reality and power of their magic, although it seems to be generally felt that it can only be used against themselves. Several very extraordinary stories were told to us by trustworthy people of more than the usual intelligence, and we were occasionally surprised at the reluctance of educated Ladinos to give information concerning native shamanism.

Because of the close relationship, the Indians try to keep secret their *nagual* lest an enemy should start hunting for it. Moreover, 539 Lacandone prayer in Tozzer's "Comparative Study of the Maya and Lacandones," page 169. As *tsar,* which a Ladino would probably give as *tsak,* means "red" in Tzeltal, the two words may be taken to be the same. *bak* means "bone," and *tci* means "blood." Many of these translations are doubtful, and all of them together do not suffice to explain the text.

II.

hun ahau bitskilim gravilan yokivin-wits yevakinok . . .

This also begins with Hun Ahau. *wits* means "hill." Beyond that no translation could be obtained.

124 The whole material on medicine and shamans is very slight and unsatisfactory. Indeed it is doubtful whether anything could be learned save after a long stay and much patient work, so secretive are the Indians on this subject, and so suspicious of inquiries. What we have is presented here in the hope that it may prove useful for comparative purposes, and offer suggestions to any worker going into this field.

796 According to Nuñez de la Vega, the old calendar was still cur-
178 rent in his time. Starr* quotes a Zotzil Calendar of eighteen
months, and Pineda* gives a Tzeltal calendar of both months and
days. We asked in the different villages what names were given
124 to the days, and were told always the Spanish names, as also for
796 the months. This may well have been from unwillingness to impart
177 ceremonial information, but consistent replies, plus the statement of
178 various Ladinos who knew the Indians well, incline me to believe
that if the old calendar is known at all, it is known only to a very
few of the most learned shamans. Feasts, as far as could be made
out, are controlled entirely by the cycle of Christian saint's days.
However, the Maya year might well have been by now adjusted to
the Gregorian, and a time-count actually kept in the old style be
stated for public purposes in the terms of the new. Pineda's cal-
endar is adapted from one published by his father† some forty years
earlier, but he speaks of it as being still current.

114 Seler also doubts the modernity of Pineda's calendar. In his
178 article "Der Festkalender der Tzeltal und der Maya von Yucatan"
796 (1898), he brings together various interesting statements. Of them,
one may be applied to this survey. Emeterio Pineda he quotes as
saying that the sixth month, Olalte, is the time of planting. This
would be in April of our year, or the end of April and early May,

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*Starr, 1908—Pineda, Vicente, 1888.
†Pineda, Emeterio, 1845.

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

as is also shown by his placing of Yaxkin, the first month, in the end 114
of December. The seventh month, Ulol, is co-ordinated with Kankin 178
of the Maya calendar. Now, according to Sebastiano Guzman, the 796
Bachajon shaman, the big fiesta at Bachajon on May 13th is called
Kank'in. Is this a coincidence, or a true calendar name, and if the
latter, what is a Yucatan calendar name doing among the Bachajon,
when we should expect the Tzeltal Ulol? In the present state of
our knowledge, no more can be done than to state the facts.

571 tions of community members. We now propose to display some of the ways in which further sets of performances, among them drinking, are associated with those already described.

Roles and the procurement of alcohol

273* 571 178 The procurement of alcohol for drinking involves social relationships which have undergone a change within the period of study. Traditionally, Aguacatenangueros have obtained 273* 439 aguardiente--a distilled sugar cane alcohol--by purchase. For many years aguardiente was manufactured by ladinos in San Cristobal and in Comitan principally for sale to the Indians. Before 1940, one ladino family established a liquor monopoly throughout the highlands and with the aid of government liquor inspectors was able to close down all competitors, which meant that production in Comitan and San Cristobal was completely stopped save for the factories of this family. In the first part of this period, then, Aguacatenangueros bought all their aguardiente from Comitan, and it was and still is known as 273* 548 comiteco by Indians and ladinos throughout the area. With the closing down of the several factories that produced aguardiente, Indians--principally Chamulas--began to manufacture the aguardiente in clandestine stills in mountain areas that were apparently difficult to patrol. [435] The monopoly determined price of about 90 pesos a garafón (18 liters) was cut nearly in half by these clandestine operators.

548 687 distilling aguardiente. Distillation of aguardiente continued for a relatively short time (perhaps as long as three to four years) because satisfactory arrangements could not be worked out within the community so that the distillers would not be denounced to the authorities, by their neighbors. Unlike Amatenango, where the clandestine distillation of aguardiente continues to the present time, inspectors were able to discover and destroy the four or five stills operated by the men of Aguacatenango. The punishments meted out to the owners were relatively severe, some having to spend as long as a year in jail and having to pay as much as 1000 pesos to secure their release.

273* [178] [432] The pattern of procurement of aguardiente has changed substantially in Aguacatenango since the time we began doing field work there. In 1957, when we were first there, the buying of aguardiente was both situation-and-family-specific. Most of the aguardiente was being bought in Pinola and later in Teopisca and had to be carried on one's back to Aguacatenango. [796] In anticipation of each fiesta or other occasion where it was known drinking would take place, each family would bring in three or four liters for that occasion. Beyond this family supply, there was relatively little aguardiente in the community. It was not at all unusual, after a fiesta, to see men inquiring all over town about the possibility of buying, or borrowing, a liter of

275 216 he paid twenty centavos and in return for which payment his name
191 was announced over the loud speaker as well as the name of a
person to whom he might wish to "dedicate" the piece.

275 216 In 1959, there occurred a set of circumstances which per-
191 mitted the Aguacatenangueros to gain control of the elements of
178 the cantina complex, and in this year cantinas were established
permanently in Aguacatenango. As the result of some difficul-
ties in Pinola, the cantineros there were required by the town
government to sell or otherwise get rid of their tocadiscos.
[432] And three or four of them sold their tocadiscos to the men in
Aguacatenango. These gas generator-driven units were set up in
various yards in the community, the loudspeakers were mounted
on tall poles as is the custom in the neighboring towns, and
men came to these door yards when they were drinking to request
[171] pieces be played with appropriate dedicatory remarks. The can-
tineros in Aguacatenango then simply filled out the rest of the
cantina complex as they had seen it in the plaza.

442 They began to buy aguardiente by the garafón, most of it
275 432 from clandestine distillers in the neighboring towns who deliver
439 it to the buyers, and also beer and other distilled beverages,
these being delivered by San Cristóbal distributors or bought and
transported there by cantineros.

275 Thus the retailers of alcohol drunk by Aguacatenangueros
are no longer ladinos and local widows, but local men. Some of

Some of
275 the effects of this change can be seen in the growing wealth of
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434 cantineros, observable in changes in house construction, and a
736 shift to the raising of small livestock (always an alternative
strategy) by women who must support themselves. With regard to
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178 drinking performances, the effect of the change in retailers seems
to have been an increase in the number of drinking performances--
especially for boys and young men, whose limited ceremonial responsibilities have made them relatively infrequent drinkers in the past. In turn, the increase in the number of drinking situations has required slight modification in the timing of the drinking--men seem to drink for shorter periods of time. Thus, for example, drinking on Sunday is becoming more common, but the continuation of drinking on a second day (Monday) has decreased. These matters will be spelled out in more detail in later sections.

273* Age-sex distribution of drinking

[434] Aguardiente is bought by men who have control of money,
[562] and it is drunk almost exclusively by them. Women drink rarely,
[858] and it is considered inappropriate for them to do so. Children
[883] do not drink at all; boys begin to drink on festive occasions at
fifteen or sixteen, and it is probably relevant that by this time
they are old enough to work for wages and usually have some money
000 of their own. Old men often give up drinking except when, as of-

753 Or, "the man is suffering from malaria which he got in hot country the last time he went to the fincas." Or, "the man's spirit is being eaten by a witch, Mr. X, who is angry with him because he did not pay back the money he owed." Every after-the-fact description of antecedent conditions implies a cause and effect relation such that the cause can be manipulated so as the patient will recover from the illness. After-the-fact descriptions of the sources of disease processes are never final since they are always dependent on (a) the further development of the disease process in the patient and (b) the confirmation in the identification of the source of illness by a successful attempt to reduce the effect of the source. If manipulation of the hypothesized source reduces the illness, the diagnosis of source is concluded to be correct; if not, further source potentials are searched for.

There is relatively little explicit procedural apparatus for adding to the inventory of after-the-fact explanations, and there are relatively few devices for modifying the modes of identification of the cause of the disease process. If a change capability is built into this theory of illness in Aguacatenango, it is not easy to detect wherein it lies.[1]

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[1] The modes of change that we have observed in Aguacatenangueros' response to illness have involved shifts from known medical practitioners to others, where the theory remains relatively unexplicated and the results of the medical practitioner's

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6: Metzger E-5 (no date) 1964 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Aguacatenango

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753 **Informants report experiencing a variety of sensed states as a disease process begins. Among these are depression (mental), cough, dry throat, diarrhea, fever, vomiting, stomach ache, loss**

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75 progress are used to judge the probability of opting some par-
177 ticular medical practitioner for a cure rather than some other.
178 Response to illness involves the principle of exhaustion of resources. In severe illness, the family of the patient may exhaust all known medical practitioners who are thought to have sufficient knowledge and skill and also may exhaust all means for motivating curers to come and perform the cure. With the diminution of resources and exhaustion of the most proper curers, the family of the patient explores curing sources whose potential for curing may be lower, but still appreciable. Successful curing under such circumstances raises the probability that this family will use some newly successful medical practitioner sooner in the next onset of illness, that is, he will be called upon before they have exhausted their resources. The introduction of INI medical practice into Aguacatenango has been in these terms, namely, that patients and their families have turned to INI medical personnel upon the exhaustion of their resources. INI procedures have maintained a ratio of successes over failures in these curing circumstances such that they have continued to be called upon, in some cases under less extreme conditions. The ratio of successes over failures has not been so great, however, that INI is seen to be a totally satisfactory replacement for the more well established practitioners. Furthermore, INI treats only a small proportion of the total range of "illnesses" that occur in the community. INI will increase the proportion of cases it treats as it modifies the Aguacatenangueros' perception of the success'failure ratio and as it increases the classes of illness that it deals with. It may be the case that INI has at present a maximal investment in time and resources in maintaining its present range and success proportion, so future severe changes may not be expected from them. There is, however, some generalization to other INI type of curers--namely, doctors in San Cristobal. The generalization here may increase the use of doctors over curers. There is the further possibility that curers are incorporating into their theories some of the simpler strategies used by doctors. This is done so crudely that it hardly involves change of beliefs at any detailed level, but rather involves a simple increase of the inventories of medicine by means of which the curer implements his theory.

8

Acknowledgments

My study of the people of Tzoˀontahal was made in four field sessions, 114
the first in 1957 with return trips in 1958, 1964, and 1965, for a total of 101
eighteen months. Brief visits were made in 1966 and 1967. With each returning 123
visit it was possible to penetrate more deeply into the lives and experiences of the villagers, most of whom were highly resistant to an outsider on the first contact. I began writing the book in 1966, and some of 128
the predictions I made came true before I finished it in 1968. These included 178
the demise of the ceremonial leadership of the *alfereces*—the 794
officials in charge of religious celebrations—the waning of the community 756
status of curers, and the killing of one of my principal informants who 627
had taken a leadership role before acquiring the traditional validation of age and experience in office. The transformations over the period of my study in this community created difficulties in recording and organizing my material. I owe whatever clarification has emerged to the efforts of Jane Olson and Gale Griffin of Yale University Press.

I am indebted to the National Institutes of Mental Health, which made 122
possible the research for this study. I owe an intellectual debt to Sol Tax, who introduced me to the problems and potentialities of the area as a locus for field study, to Norman McQuown, who gave me the first instruction in Tzeltal and provided a grammar which facilitated learning the language, and to Manning Nash, who provided some of the earlier formulations of the culture from which I have borrowed. I am grateful to Duane Metzger and Gerald Williams, who generously provided equipment and facilities for work with informants in San Cristóbal Las Casas in the summer of 1964. Alfonso Villa Rojas, who was director of the Instituto Nacional 123
Indígenista, was of great assistance in the first summer's field trip, introducing me to leaders within the town and in the Instituto's headquarters in Las Casas.

Preface

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> And so we shall be able to do what our mothers
> did and what our fathers did here where our
> Holy Father sees us and our Holy Mother sees us.
>
> *From the prayer said at the*
> *time of taking offices in*
> *the civil hierarchy*

In all societies, some of the ideology and behavior of the past persists after 000 their relevance to current problems has ended. How much this continuity eases the absorption of change by providing meaning and motivation and how much it hinders the ability to deal with current issues and to plan for the future is a long-standing social problem. It is of special relevance to developing nations undergoing changes that transform all social institutions. Developing nations have focused their planning on economic change in the hope that other institutions will respond automatically. This hope has not been justified.

H
Mexico has shown a growing awareness of the strength to be drawn 185 from its rich cultural heritage in the five decades of development since the revolution. The changes that were transforming the cities a generation ago are now drawing enclaves of Indian populations into the mainstream of national development. In the 1930s government policy was directed toward transforming Indians into modern nationals. Since the 1950s there has been an increasing effort to incorporate Indians without suppressing their distinctive customs and languages. The old melting pot policy has given way to a new policy of selective adaptation.

T
For the Indians, adhering to the ways of the ancestors is the means of 177 surviving as a people. Their sense of cultural survival is threatened by the 178

177 very adjustments and adaptations that make economic survival possible.
178 Cut off from other Indian communities around them since the Conquest,
when their ceremonial centers were destroyed and the political hierarchy
which drew them into a single polity was replaced, the Indians were able
to retain a sense of cultural independence within the corporate communi-
[621] ties (Wolf 1957b). Each community developed a distinctive style of life in
which the old pre-Conquest beliefs and customs were reworked with the
colonial Spanish introductions. Validation of their behavior lay in the be-
[769] lief that they were doing as the ancestors did, and that they were living
"in the eyes of our ancestors."

[769] This social fiction is now threatened by a growing disbelief in the presence of these supernatural figures. The crisis caused by the disjunction between belief and behavior is forcing the Indians to reassess their present condition. Awareness of the contradictions between what they do and what they think they ought to do is forced upon them by events over which they have no control.

121 This study of a Maya Indian community in the state of Chiapas, Mexico, deals with the problem of the relation between belief and behavior in a changing world. It is a problem that we have failed to solve in our own society, if the labels of our time—The Age of Anxiety, The Society of Alienation—have meaning. I have studied this small Indian society not in search of a solution but as a way of phrasing the problem in the widest possible context.

I selected Tzoˀontahal because the people seemed to have retained a traditional Indian culture even though the community is on the Pan-American Highway linking them with the departmental and national capitals. The question of what changes had affected their lives and how they had responded to them was relevant to my interest in the effects of national changes on local groups. In the last year of my study my interest broadened from an enquiry into responses to external changes to a study of the meanings assigned to both internal and external changes.

621 Like many other predominantly Mayan communities of the Chiapas highlands, the community is the context of all meaningful social relations. Endogamy and a belief that the people who live in the center and the nearby barrios are descended from the same ancestors give a sense of eth-

186 tions of self will find a responsive audience only within these linguistic
and physical boundaries. The sense of insulation is a denial of regional
and national political institutions in which they interact with the other In-
dians and Ladinos who are part of their present world and share their his-
175 tory. The town itself is a product of the Spanish colonial *congregación,*
361 which drew together diverse Indian populations that had been scattered in
162 small settlements. The outlying barrios are occupied by Indians who have
829 moved out from the center, as well as foreign Indians who had worked in
the *fincas,* or large plantations, within the township. These latter people
are referred to by a derisive term, *Kurik̦,* meaning roughly "country hick."
Beyond these, and still within the municipal limits, there are a series of *colonias,* settlements populated by Indians who have moved here from other towns and by *mestizos,* or acculturated Indians. These settlers acquired land in the time of Juarez or later in the Cardenas period. Ladino men are called *Kašlan* and women *Šinlan;* foreigners who do not appear to be of the country are called *Alemán,* the Spanish term for German.

121 The focus of this book is on the lives and thoughts of people living
within the center. The people of Tzoˀontahal live in a square world, sur-
772 rounded by a round universe. From the square hole, cut in the earth at the
center post of their square house to receive the sacrifice of a live chicken
when the house is built, stretches a square village (it appears as a rectangle
on the map, but they draw it as a square).[2] The fields are measured in
[804] squares of twenty-five arms' breadths, with five handspans measuring the
[78] square between each plant. Within this square world, they have elaborated
techniques for dealing with spiritual and human co-residents in curing ri-
105 tuals, offerings for crops, burial practices, and baptism rites. Their present
177 cultural stock reveals a selective absorption of Spanish colonial features
178 along with twentieth-century innovations. They have techniques for planting and harvesting milpa, marketing the pottery manufactured in all the households, curing an eclipse of the moon, divining causes of illness and curing the maladjusted social relations which cause it, manufacturing and

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[171] [2] This view of the world as square is shared by Tzeltal and Tzotzil neighbors in Larraínzar (Holland 1963:69), San Pedro Chenalhó (Guiteras Holmes 1961:254), and Pinola (Hermitte 1964). The four-direction concept of the village and world noted by Landa (Tozzer 1941:135) suggests a square-space concept.

marketing contraband liquor, minimizing discord and settling disputes 105 177 locally, and preserving continuity in a town administration marked by the 178 annual rotation of officials.

These are the techniques acquired for dealing with the world in which they were born. For the world into which they are being propelled, they are combining new skills with old, creating a semblance of continuity but with a recombination of elements. Fitting this square community into the round post-Columbian world is a task consciously undertaken by the Mexican government. Within the town, strategies are being developed to meet the new demands made on the community as economic and political horizons widen.

The problem focus on the relation between belief and behavior in a 121 changing social environment can be restated by asking how behavior is conditioned by custom and how it responds to cues from the environment. The first class of responses is adjustive, fitting the behavior of the individual to a given environment, and the second is adaptive, changing the external environment (Kluckhohn 1962:46). I shall use the distinction Mowrer and Kluckhohn (1944:258) have made between adaptation, "which develops and changes inherited ways of behaving," and adjustment, "which develops and changes habits," with the former referring to socially acquired responses and the latter to individual responses. A moving equilibrium is found when changes in adjustive and adaptive responses fit a persisting framework of understandings and explanations. Both adjustive and adaptive responses follow rules. These rules enable social groups to generate consistent, understandable, and appropriate behavior in response to a variety of settings. The "rules of the game" set the parameters for adjustive behavior; the "rules of strategy" generate behavior adaptive to change. The rules of the game are validated by the belief system of the society; the rules of strategy can be justified on the same premises, but if they are so fundamental as to challenge existing values, they require a new ideology.

The model of change which takes into account the techniques of adaptation and adjustment occurring within small-scale societies is that of moving equilibrium. Wallace (1962:142) has stated the dimensions of this model:

> 121 A culture, under certain conditions, during a period of time can be said to be an open system in a state of stable but moving equilibrium: that is to say, it maintains a boundary, accepts inputs and produces outputs at approximately equal rates, and changes continuously but gradually in internal structure.

The concept of equilibrium is one way to talk about the constraints which make behavior congruent with beliefs. Given a constantly changing ecological setting due to an expanding population and a changing man-land ratio, the stability of the system depends on the adequacy of existing institutions to handle conflict and of shared understandings to explain events. Movement stems from the tension between individual and social goals and the adaptations to bring them into closer harmony. The basic condition for the kind of change characteristic of a moving equilibrium is that conflict is contained within the community.

128 I have organized the data to clarify features maintaining equilibrium and to show the direction in which the society is moving. First I describe formal, prescribed behavior for each institutional complex and relate it to the beliefs that underlie it. Following each of these chapters I analyze strategies formulated in response to changes coming from within or outside the community. The formal behavior providing a framework for continuity is related to place spirits in Chapter 1, to economic activities in Chapter 2, to customs and rituals in the family and neighborhood in Chapters 4 and 5, to civil and religious government in Chapters 7 and 8. Changing strategies are related to economic activities in Chapter 3, to social relations as revealed in curing practices in Chapter 6, and to political relations in Chapter 9.

177 Implicit in the organization is an ordering of institutions from most
178 static to most dynamic. In the economy, agricultural technology has been
[241] stabilized at the colonial level of adaptation at which the wooden plow,
[323] hoe, and machete were added to, but did not displace, the digging stick,
while in pottery manufacture, both techniques and products have re-
[592] mained unchanged. The organization of work groups remains limited to
[476] the household except for the introduction of cooperatives in recent years.
[361] In domestic institutions there has been an adaptation to living in a compact settlement with the emphasis on the bilateral kinship group.

pact settlement with the emphasis on the bilateral kinship group. The au- 177
thority of the elders in settling conflicts in the family and the community 178
is weakened, although the hierarchy remains intact. In religious institu- [627]
tions, the personnel has remained the same, but the authority of the reli- [794]
gious officials has weakened and the belief in the deities and ancestral [776]
figures has been undermined. [769]

Political leadership is the most dynamic area of change. The power of [623]
the *principales* had already been taken over by young civil officials when I [756]
first went to the town in 1957. The curers, who retained the power derived from belief in their control over the supernatural, were the core of resistance to change in the decade that I knew the community. But this control was being challenged by civil officials and factional leaders, who were aware of its repressive effect. The dynamic aspect of the political sector is linked to the fact that the new leaders saw the necessity of seizing power from those who were privileged in the traditional society. They were reworking the social structure to pave the way for the acceptance of development opportunities being offered by the national government.

In Chapters 10, 11, and 12 I have summarized the structuring of behav- 128
ior in roles, place, and time and described how these patterns have been affected by change. The following questions are raised in the summary chapters:

1. The role system: How are people recruited into roles? How are roles coordinated? How are performances evaluated? The matrix of roles provides the patterned expectations of what others will do in a given situation. Some of the decisions made in assigning people to roles allow little room for choice. In other cases, new functions, such as those imposed upon governing officials, have replaced traditional bases for making decisions and in turn upset the balance of power between elders, curers, and leaders in civil office. (Continuity and change in the role structure are analyzed in Chapter 10.)

2. The setting: How is appropriate behavior defined for each institutional setting? What kinds of behavior are replicated in each setting? How are changes in role relations reflected in positions assumed in each setting? Observations of behavior in the church and the

128 school included in Appendix 3 provide the data for an inductive analysis of conventions established by place. (These are compared and analyzed in Chapter 11.)

3. Timing of behavior: How does time enter into the consciousness of people's planning of activities? Time is a resource the use of which indicates the values assigned to activities and the relative power of people in bargaining positions. As such, it is a sensitive index to changes in strategies for allocating effort. (The sense of time is examined in reference to the scheduling of performances and interpreting the behavior of others in Chapter 12.)

The summary chapters provide the basis for testing the following hypotheses in the final chapter:

1. The stability of the society varies directly with:
    - a. the degree of control over time and place
    - b. the efficiency of its procedures for adjusting conflict
    - c. the ability to validate behavioral innovations in terms of existing values
    - d. the effectiveness of the techniques for transforming old power positions whose functions contradict changed social conditions into ceremonial posts
2. The lability of the society varies directly with:
    - a. the gap between expectations and experience
    - b. the degree of dissonance between traditional explanations and current interpretations of events

177 178 During the period I worked in Tzoʾontahal, the fundamental propositions on which behavior was predicated were being challenged. When old beliefs are waning, the question is whether the techniques developed to maintain the old conditions for equilibrium will persist in the future.

121 Fortes (1959:25) has pointed out that the "serious defect . . . of generalized enthnographic descriptions" is that they do not show "how ritual or belief is actually used by men and women to regulate their lives." My purpose is to indicate not only how belief and ritual serve the ends of regulation but also how beliefs are transformed in the process of performing ri-

Chapter 1

Spirits and Places

Social space is the cognitive pattern of relationships imposed upon any ter- 361
rain. In Amatenango del Valle[1] there are two superimposed patterns. One
is defined by the nation for the purposes of political administration. This
follows the pattern of colonial administration of *municipios,* or townships,
with a *cabecera,* or administrative center, containing the church, town
hall, and school house, and serving a number of colonias and *rancherias,*
local hamlets or nuclei of populations. The other pattern is defined by the 361
inhabitants using Tzeltal terminology or a Tzeltal rendition of a Spanish 197
name. In this pattern, domains of good and bad spirits are defined, and be- 776
havior appropriate to each place is specified in myths and rituals. Persist- 178
ence of this pattern has had profound implications for continuity of pre-
Conquest culture. It provides a ground plan for the system of social con-
trol and security exercised by the old gods and their human intermedi-
aries.

In the following section, I will discuss first territorial divisions defined 128
by national law and modified by indigenous categories, and then the inter-
action between the spirits of persons and places.

THE TERRITORIAL DIVISIONS

The township of Amatenango del Valle is located at 92°30′ longitude 131
and 16°30′ latitude in the highland zone of the state of Chiapas. The town 361
center is located no more than fifty yards from the Pan-American High- 491
way twenty-five miles southeast of the departmental capital of San Cris-
tóbal.

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[1] I use the national designation derived from Nahuatl, Amatenango del Valle, to refer [101]
to the township, and the Tzeltal term Tzoʔontahal to refer to the center.

were not affected by the congregación. The fact that there is no mention 621
in the post-Conquest documents of the introduction of dual divisions sug- [174]
gests that the model was indigenous to the area.

The Indians of Tzoʔontahal state that the dividing line of the division 173
was established in its present position when a new church, replacing the 621
first one which was burned, was built on the present site. Judging from a
date carved in a beam of the church, this must have been about the year
1746. The endogamous restriction on marriage has not led to a sense of ra- 582
cial distinction between the two populations. Both groups feel that they 621
are descendants of the same ancestor figures and under their guardianship.
The same Tzeltal patronyms are distributed on both sides of the division, 551
although there is a clustering of some of them on one or another side. 621
Table 2 shows the distribution of patronyms of 714 male and female
adults; 88 percent of the patronyms are found in both divisions.[4]

The functions of the division in organizing social groupings have been 178
eroded, but some survive. Equal representation by civil officials from the 62
upper and lower sections, when there are two or more posts at the same
rank, is still in effect. The principle of alternation of the single posts of
president and *síndico,* his administrative assistant, so that one term the
incumbent is chosen from Ahk'olnantik and the following term from
Alannantik has not been a decisive factor since the 1930s, when Indian
communities were being drawn into more active participation in national
programs of change (Chapter 9).

Residential expansion within the center has been almost entirely in 621
Ahk'olnantik because of the addition of ejido lands formerly belonging to 178
the finca of San Nicolás on this side of town. This one-sided increase in 161
population finally resulted, in 1965, in a breakdown of the principle of 794
equal representation in the ceremonial posts involving high expenses, [423]
those of the four *alfereces*. Although attempts were made to find candidates in Alannantik, there were no men with sufficient funds who had not

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[4] Carrasco (n.d.:5) quotes a document in the *Archivo General de Indias de Sevilla, Guatemala* 16 indicating that Spanish patronyms were given to the heads of calpules and that these were to be extended to all members of the calpul. The present distribution of name groups in the dual divisions cannot support this, nor can it refute the possibility that Spanish patronyms were related to some larger kin or territorial grouping more than three hundred years ago.

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held that post formerly, and all four alfereces were for the first time taken from one side.

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TABLE 2. Patronyms in the Dual Division

Patronym	*Alannantiḳ only*	*Ahḳ'olnantiḳ only*	*Alannantiḳ and Ahḳ'olnantiḳ*
Alvarez			37
Arguella Jimenez	1		
Bautista		1	
Bautista Čail			52
Bautista Čo		5	
Bautista Koʔton			14
Bautista Saʔben			20
Cepeda			1
Cepeda Čilol			29
Cruz Mendez	1		
Diaz			6
Diaz Čamo			5
Diaz Ton			8
Diaz Uz			42
Gomez		2	
Gomez Bot			39
Gomez Kompaš			73
Gomez Kut			49
Gomez Waris	1		
Gonzalez	1		
Gonzalez Ikob		3	
Guitierrez	1		
Hernandez	1		
Hernandez Čela	1		
Hernandez Tenan	4	1	
Jimenez		2	
Leon		2	
Leon Či			21
Leon Čulik			14
Leon Malatz	2		
Lopez			1
Lopez Lab'	1		
Lopez Lin			31
Lopez Mai	11		
Lopez Pokoš		13	
Lopez Tapiya		5	
Lopez Šunton		18	

773 *"Good."*
778 *They waited a while and the water came. "Are you going to drink?"*
539 *They drank, and then they made the sign of the rainbow. The president*
769 *sent his sindico to meet them. The sindico got drunk on the way. He sat down halfway in the road. The brothers met him there. They were angry that a fiesta was not prepared for them. And for this they left town, and went to live in Chiapas.*

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778
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123
This tale is known to everyone in town, and there is no doubt as to its authenticity expressed by those who have given versions of it. When I took some of the Indians on a trip to Guatemala, they pointed out the rocks where the brothers encountered the devil. When they arrived in Guatemala and saw a bus marked Antigua they expressed amazement that the town was still in existence.

769
778
Some people claim to have seen the ancestors, whom they describe as wearing the old style costume—a long shirt with the hat now worn by the alfereces. The ancestors are believed to have watched over the village from a mound rising abruptly before the mouth of the cave, called Hol Shan, or Head of Palm, because of the trees growing on it (Plate 1). From this eminence they could watch the streets of the village and see whether anyone was trying to bring in evil (Plate 2). They were able to discern the power of evil in the souls of the newborn and could snatch the soul before its possessor grew up to cause evil. Their human agents in guarding the town
[756] against evil were the curers (*ʔuʔuletik*), who in the context of guardianship were called *meʔiltatil*.[7]

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Each year on the Day of the Cross, May 3d in the Catholic calendar,[8] a fiesta is held in honor of the ancestors. It refers back to the fiesta which ought to have been held for the returning Shuntonetik, and is performed in the interest of the whole community as a means of ensuring good relations with the ancestors.

[756] Formerly the curers were responsible for conducting this fiesta. An informant recalled the ritual:

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[7] The guardianship role of the curers is related to the functions of pre-Conquest officials, called *ghcanalum*, "caretakers of the soil" (Calnek 1962:25).

[178] [8] The date of the Day of the Cross was changed by the Vatican in 1964. When the local priest tried to reschedule the fiesta in the community, he encountered strong opposition. The Indians continue to celebrate the Day of the Cross on May 3d.

The curers used to go up to the cave with the alfereces, the mayordomos 796
[*religious officials*], *the prayer reciters, and the people of the village.* 769
When they arrived there, the mayordomos played the guitar and gourd [794]
rattle. They lit candles and incense, and the leading curers would go in- [778]
side the cave. All the people contributed money for the liquor and candles [756]
which was collected by the officials. They said that they spoke to the ancestors inside, where there was a lake and a beautiful field. They asked for rain and good crops. They would come out and tell the people waiting outside what the ancestors had said.

Then one year [*in 1957*] *during the fiesta of the cave, the curers went* 796
into the cave. The people said to the curers, "We want to see the owners." 769
The curers said they would come out, but they didn't. The people waited 756
and waited. A boy went inside with the curers. They tried to prevent him, 781
saying, "Won't you be afraid?" He said, "No, let's go in." They entered 178
twenty feet inside the door. The curers said, "Let us stay here." The boy asked them where was the river, the lake, and the milpa that were supposed to be inside. The curer replied, "It is all a lie. Now you know; don't tell the people." But when he came out, the boy told the people it was all a deception.

Since the late 1950s the ritual has changed. The curers no longer officiate, nor do they enter the cave and speak to the ancestors as they did formerly. The *fiscal,* or assistant to the priest, leads the mayordomos, alfer- [794]
eces, and prayer-reciters to the cave on the Day of the Cross and simply replace the palm cross at the entrance to the cave just as they do with the palm crosses fixed to the wooden crosses marking the roads leading into the town. The curers have attempted to revive the belief in the presence of the ancestors by saying that their nephew is in residence now, but no one I ever spoke to believes this. Most people agree that the ancestors live permanently in Chiapa de Corso.[9]

The hill and cave owners. While people try to maintain a good 776
relationship with the spirits of the house, of the springs, and of the Cave of the Ancestors, they avoid the dangerous spirits of the hills and caves

[9] A similar myth concerning the departure of the ancestors to go live in Chiapa de [773]
Corzo exists in Pinola (Hermitte 1964). [171]

woman opened the door, she said, "Ay, Dios!" *The owner of the cave did* 756
not like this, and at that moment, he disappeared. Her husband returned 776
the next morning. He beat her when he heard of the arrival of the hill 778
owner and his disappearance when she invoked the name of the Lord. 539
From that day on, he lost his luck and remained a poor man.

The personalities of the cave owners are more fully defined than those 776
of the spirits which reside in the forests. These tree spirits are able to talk to people, or they may sing, "as a mother sings to her child." They sometimes play tricks, misdirecting those who are lost in the woods. A man who intends to kill his enemy may go to talk to the tree spirits to gain their advice. Some plant spirits, such as tobacco, are stronger than others. Indians sometimes address the tobacco plant as "our grandfather" when [824]
they approach it, asking leave to pass. Some say that if you chew the tobacco plant you will have strength to overcome evil spirits when you walk in the woods.

An especially fearful group of spirits called *bohwaletik* roam the wooded hills in the late afternoons. These spirits, who look like Ladinos, [829]
are feared because they cut off people's heads to feed to the church bell in a neighboring town or to give to the spirits of major construction projects, such as dams. Suspicions are immediately aroused when a solitary Ladino is seen on the outskirts of the town near evening, and if several Indians sight him, they may even kill him.

Persistence of belief and rituals related to the old gods and demons that 776
were part of the Maya pantheon is directly related to the fact that 178 •
the Indians continue to live in the same place surrounded by the hills and caves that were the habitations of both good and bad spirits. The landscape serves as a mnemonic device, keeping alive the myths of the past. Everyone accepts the knowledge that the spirits once lived here; the only doubt is whether they continue to inhabit their appropriate places, particularly in the case of the ancestors who were responsible for crops and security. This is not a crisis of loss in belief, but a phasing into history of the mythological past. Since there is no longer acceptance of the curers' [781]
claim to communication with the spirits, the Indians believe they may have gone elsewhere. It is characteristic of these Indians that they do not 829

241 indicate these bases and assess the efficiency of the agriculturalists in allocating resources of labor, land, and seeds.

423 311 [175] *Land use.* The historical factor of the greatest significance in establishing the present economic position of the town was the act of possession of ejido lands in 1937. The first grant included 4,873.53 *hectares*[1] of land of the following categories:

irrigated flat land	139.77
non-irrigated plots	1,018.37
pasture	1,659.65
hill land	2,055.74

The high hill land with its cover of pine and scrub oak was set aside for use of all members of the community for hunting and gathering firewood. The pasture lands are similarly controlled by the civil authority for common use. The cultivable lands passed into the hands of 385 ejidatarios, each of whom received one-half hectare. A further grant in 1954 provided an increase of 2,578 hectares, including:

low mountain land	2,277.60
pasture land	300.40

423 178 The possession of land by individual small-plot cultivators reversed the trend toward large-scale commercial agriculture begun in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The land of the Indians that had been expropriated in the latter part of the nineteenth century by forced sales was to be held in the possession of the townspeople, "benefiting all with its products and uses" (Act of possession, 1937, Town Archives).

423 241 311 178 With the increase in ejido lands acquired in 1954, the share of each ejidatario has been increased to one hectare. This is usually split between low land in San Caralampio and high land in San Isidro and Tulancá, giving two growing seasons. The advantages of different growing seasons are that there is a more balanced work schedule and that there are two harvests, one in November and one in July. The ejido land grant has stabilized subsistence crop cultivation in the economy of the town and in-

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[1] A hectare is equal to 2.46 acres.

creased the economic independence of the Indians. The present total of 423
613 ejidatarios in 1965 has increased 59 percent since the original grant. 241
The dependence of the town's economy on the ejido land can be assessed 311
in the fact that 63 percent of the pasture land is held in ejido grants. The 178 •
use of land resources in the township is summarized in Table 4.

TABLE 4. Agricultural Productivity by Size of Landholding

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Size of landholding (hectares)	*Weight of produce (kilograms)*	*Value of produce (pesos)*	*Land used (percentage)*
Less than 5 hectares			
Corn	200,000	120,000	83.
Wheat	29,000	27,550	16.8
Fruit	3,000	9,000	.2
1 hectare of ejido land			
Corn	319,688	223,781	49.
Corn (with beans)	30,320	21,224	6.
Beans (with corn)	14,000	17,360	
Wheat	185,580	181,580	28.
Beans	84,322	104,322	17.
More than 5 hectares			
Corn	67,388	45,117	34.
Corn (with beans)	96,550	68,108	51.
Beans (with corn)	42,985	56,740	
Alfalfa	350,000	42,000	4.6
Fruit	14,508	9,720	4.4
Other			6.

SOURCE: 1960 census, Mexico.

According to the 1960 census figures on productivity per hectare, pri- 423
vately owned plots under five hectares yield the highest return in corn 433
(1,097 kgs. per hectare), privately owned plots over five hectares the next 241
highest return (925 kgs. per hectare), and ejido plots of one hectare the
least (810 kgs. per hectare). In the census evaluation of wheat and corn
production on privately owned plots of less than five hectares, wheat ap-
parently yields a higher return (807 pesos per hectare of wheat compared
with 658 pesos per hectare of corn). This relative return is nearly the same [435]
for the corn produced on ejido lands (820 pesos per hectare return on
wheat compared with 603 pesos for corn). However, this is figured at the
maximum market price for wheat of 124 pesos per
100 kgs.

423 432 609 621 was in a low gully where crops would not grow, and no one within the community would buy it.

Land is frequently pawned by farmers as security on a loan. The title to 423 the land is left with the lender, who can foreclose on the debt if the inter- 426 est payments of five percent per month are not paid. Often the land pawned may be worth far more than the loan. Loans in town are rarely backed with security, and if something is pawned, it is usually clothing or household items.

178 With the growing significance of ejido lands and land sale, inheritance 423 of land is of less importance in the economic expectations of each succes- 428 sive generation. The rules controlling inheritance are theoretically simple: 593 equal inheritance for all children regardless of sex. The parents usually give some land when the child establishes a separate household; the remainder is then given at the death of the parent or when old age makes it impossible for the parent to work any more. The youngest child remaining at home works his father's land, or if he is living with his wife's family, his father-in-law's land, until the latter's death. His family inherits the house site as well as an equal share of the privately held lands. Complications arise because of modifications of the basic rule of equal inheritance by provisions for care and maintenance of the aged parents. Frequent dis- [692] putes over inheritance are settled in local courts or passed on to the De- [647] partment of Indian Affairs in San Cristóbal.

The selection of which crop to grow is related to the kind and amount 241 of land a farmer owns. The most important crops are corn, beans, and wheat. Some squash and sugarcane are grown in the lower ejido lands of San Caralampio. Cabbage is grown by one Indian who possesses fertile irrigated lands in the center. Most Indians, however, are unwilling to undertake the risk of raising a cash crop since there is greater chance of the crop being stolen and they cannot afford a bad market price when they harvest.

241 Relating the size of holding to the crop grown, according to figures in 423 the Mexican census of 1960[3] (Table 4) one can see that in privately 433

[3] The census figures are based on estimates received from town officials, who submit [659] them monthly to the census bureau. The officials of the town question the household heads as they see them in the streets or in their houses about how much seed they planted. They then estimate what the yield per almud for good and bad land is, from their own crops.

base, so the farmers prefer to plant the better, quicker-growing corn seed 242
in a mixed sand and loam soil.

The final evaluation of land is based on results at harvest. The range of 242
variation is large: from 48 liters of yield per liter of seed to 80 litters of 433
yield per liter of seed. Township officials say that the average harvest is
five *fanegas* (1 fanega equals 12 liters) or 60 liters per liter of seed. Market [435]
prices are of less importance in deciding what crops will be planted than
are considerations of what the soil "wants" and what labor is involved.
Corn is grown on all kinds of land, whereas beans and special crops such
as cabbages can be grown only on the more fertile soil. Wheat can be
grown only where there is irrigation. One farmer raised cabbage in coop- [434]
eration with a Ladino and earned 1,000 pesos, four times the amount he
earned with his wheat crop the previous year. Despite the greater return
for cabbage, the farmer did not plant it the next year when the Ladino,
who had supported the first venture, withdrew his support. The reason he
gave for this was the fact that there was more work involved and he could
not accomplish it alone: first the crop had to be planted, then transplanted,
then irrigated every three days in the early growing period, and cultivated
two or three times; every eight days he had to get rid of worms. He esti- [461]
mated that growing cabbage involved well over four times the amount of
work necessary for growing corn.

Labor. Most agricultural work is performed by members of 592
households with exchange or hired labor. There is no specialization of 241
labor when the work force includes two or more men since the men 476
cooperate in doing each task. Communal labor is restricted to the mainte- 464
nance of the main irrigation ditches. Each year the ditches are dug out 241
where the sides have eroded and cleaned of brush and leaves. The presi- 621
dent and judges unite to decide on a time for this work and announce it 476
on a loudspeaker of one of the cantinas. This usually occurs around the
twenty-fifth of December. Formerly, all the men of the community helped
in this work whether or not they owned irrigated fields. In 1958 those who [178]
did not own such land "got smart" and refused to work. [423]

In 1962 the civil officials decided that a cement canal should be installed 653
near the source of the spring. They tried to finance it with contributions 621
423
241

628 People with lands in hot country recount that during droughts the In-
796 dians from the neighboring town of Chamula have held rainmaking fies-
782 tas for which they solicit contributions from other Indians.

821 *The Chamulteco came to us and said, "Let all of us who have milpas*
731 *contribute five pesos for a fiesta." He brought the candles. In the little hill there the people brought drums and flute. We ate chickens and drank liquor. For eleven hours he prayed, and in the afternoon it rained.*

628 The *kuriketik*, rural inhabitants of the colonia of San Vicente who
241 migrated to Amatenango from Chanal, have no irrigated lands and de-
789 pend directly on rainfall throughout the growing season. Indians of the center know of their practice of sticking their digging sticks into the ground with the points toward the sky "to puncture the clouds" when they have planted their milpa, but they do not imitate this practice. Control over the supply of water in the irrigated lands has apparently led to the neglect of supernatural appeals even where the canals do not supply water. Under pressure of extended drought, they will resort to spiritual intercession through Chamula or Oxchuk practitioners in whom they have some faith.

241 Acquiring the protection of the gods does not obviate the practical activ-
776 ities necessary in the cultivation of crops. Fiestas for the saints are a repay-
782 ment for services rendered in watching over the milpa. The sponsorship of
796 fiestas for the saints by the community ensures the protection for all of the crops, and general crop failure due to drought or high winds is explained as a result of mismanagement of these community-wide fiestas. The offering of candles to the spiritual owner of one's own milpa is a kind of individual insurance policy for future crops as well as a repayment for the gift of the corn harvest. The peasant notion of surplus value is implicit in this reciprocal relation: the payment, or gift, of two candles to the milpa spirit is far less than the value of the harvest. But the account is balanced by the expenditure of this surplus in communal fiestas.

POTTERY PRODUCTION

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178 Making pottery has been a speciality of the town since pre-Conquest
172 days. The old site of the town contains sherds of pottery which is remarkably similar in texture, design, and form to the pottery made now.

000 bly similar in texture, design, and form to the pottery made now. Just as a
323 man defines himself as an agriculturalist, a woman defines herself as a potter.
462 Men complain if their wives do not produce pottery, and I know of
[593] two cases of separation on the grounds that the woman was not fulfilling
[586] one of her functions as housewife by helping the family budget with pottery
[461] production. Most women like to make pottery: it helps them to pass
the day, and they say they would be bored without it. Some of the women
who have gone with their husbands for extended stays in hot country have
tried to make pottery out of clays available there, but because of its inferior
quality, they have not had much success. Unlike women of neighboring
towns, the women of Tzoˀontahal usually do not accompany their
husbands to the fincas "because they have their work at home."

323 *Making pottery.* The women make a wide variety of household
• 178 and ceremonial objects, but the item which has the widest market distribution
is the water storage jar (See Plate 7).[1] They introduce new items in response
to local needs, such as the funnel used in channeling liquor into
large containers from the retort of the still. One vessel which is disappearing
from production is the large ceremonial cooking pot. The only woman
who knew how to do this (or who admitted to knowing, since it is unpaid
work) died in the 60s, and no one has replaced her. One woman who had
a reputation for eccentricity, introduced several elaborate vases and ashtrays.
Her creative imagination was best exemplified in a combined ashtray
and vase which featured four frogs poised on the lip of the tray, presumably
drinking from a fountain. Reina (1962–1963) has pointed out
[171] that women of the Guatemalan community of Chinautla who wish to be
[156] accepted in the community must limit themselves to conventional forms,
and the same restriction seems to apply in Tzoˀontahal.

317 The women of a household work as a group in collecting clay and in
592 firing pottery. Clay is free since it is found in the communally owned hills
[323] on the perimeter of the town. It is collected preferably during the rainy
[423] season when it is easier to gather from the open gorges in which it is
found, but if the supply runs out, other trips are made. All of the women
of the household go, sometimes with neighbors or relatives in groups of
[482] five or six. They collect large clay balls weighing from forty to fifty
pounds which they carry in a net bag on their
backs with a tumpline.

[1] (see plates following p.198..Analyst)

pounds which they carry in a net bag on their backs with a tumpline. The 317
sand which is mixed with the clay is found nearby. In preparing it for use, 323
the clay has to be chopped with a hatchet and soaked. A temper for cooking
pots is made of ground sandstone, called *baš*. This is found near the [438]
border of the neighboring town of Aguacatenango, and sometimes Indians
of that town bring pieces which they exchange for a soup bowl or other
small pottery item.

Variation in the color of the clay—it may be white, white mixed with yellow, true yellow, black, or blue-green—provides the basis for discerning its quality. The white clay is thought to be best since it doesn't break as much in firing. The preferred clay is very soft, and the women test deposits by feeling them with their hands.

The rhythm of work is regular. Children under three years of age climb 323
on their mother's back or lap or sometimes stand by her side nursing. The 461
women do not interrupt their work when this happens, although they may [855]
shift their body to accommodate the child. In the organization of work,
there is no discussion of what is to be done or who will do it. Orders are
given only to the young children. When the women are working, all motions [857]
which would require a break in activity are assigned to children who
bring unfinished pots to be worked on and shoo away chickens or dogs.
The standardization of production rhythm is evidenced in the uniformity
in time required for each operation. Timing one potter's production of 10
apastes (soup bowls) on two different days, I found that she spent one
hour and 10 minutes for each set, an average of 11 minutes per pot. Another
woman made a *comal* (platter) in 26 minutes and a second one in
28 minutes. A pair of larger bowls produced by another woman took 15
minutes each.

The continuity in tradition of pottery production stems from a tightly 323
organized behavioral schema with defined units of motion and stages of [178]
production. I follow Piaget in his definition of behavioral schema which
Flavell (1963:54) has summarized as follows:

> Thus, an action sequence, if it is to constitute a schema, must have a 121
> certain cohesiveness and must maintain its identity as a quasi-stable,
> repeatable unit. It must possess component actions which are tightly

perienced potter in the household, sometimes with the help of a trainee. 323
Older women prefer doing the lighter tasks, such as putting on the han- 461
dles and mouth or applying the slip of watered clay, to raising the sides which requires greater force and exertion of the back muscles. A second basis for the division of labor is the kind of item produced: older women for example, make bowls in preference to large water jugs and containers.

Learning to make pottery. A girl begins to make pottery about 323
the age of eleven. First she makes small replicas of the articles her mother 868
produces. Then, under her mother's direction, she learns to prepare the clay. The mother feels the clay with her fingers, telling her daughter to add more sand if this is lacking. She is taught to knead the clay three times. In making the pot, the most difficult phases are mixing the clay, forming the base, and rounding out the walls of the vessel as it is raised. The child is expected to learn slowly and is encouraged gently to improve each step. While the child works on her first pot, the mother makes a similar one; three or four times they exchange vessels, and the mother shapes her daughter's pot into a better form.

About two generations ago, marriages at the age of eleven or twelve 582
were the rule. Since most of the intensive learning of pottery techniques 178 •
begins at that age, pottery was taught to the bride by her mother-in-law if 323
she resided in her husband's house (Blom and La Farge 1927). Most mar- [606]
riages now are contracted for girls from fourteen to seventeen years of age.
By this time they are already proficient potters and accustomed to working [593]
with their mothers. Therefore there is greater stress on their remaining in [591]
or near the parental home after marriage.

The pottery is fired in the streets of the town outside the house, usually 323
after the women have made four or five dozen items. The pots are set on planks forming a rough square around the fire in the center. Charcoal is added to the fire as the brush or corn husks set between the pots begin to burn. The women tend the pots, turning them every five minutes until the surface is well dried and hardened. Wood is added to the fire, and then the jugs are stacked in a pyramid, each one protected from the one it touches with a broken piece of pottery. The stacking is crucial to permit even firing and must be done carefully so that none are broken. Once the

have recently sought additional lands in the ejido of Brindis to meet these 423
minimal requirements. This preference for expanding subsistence agriculture 433
to hiring out as laborers is the best index to the persistence of traditional 178 •
economic pursuits. 241
464

Farmers who do not have a cash crop in wheat may be forced to sell 434
corn even when there is no surplus. Because they usually need the cash as 435
soon as they harvest their crop, they must sell when the prices are low. Thus their consumption needs exacerbate the disadvantage they face in the market.

Clothing, whether traditional or modern in style, requires cash outlays. 434
Women have kept the traditional costume while men are modifying their 291
clothing. Even when they go to hot country, older women wear the heavy 178
cotton skirt bound with a thick sash and topped by an embroidered blouse; some younger women have adopted the long cotton dirndl skirt and peasant blouse. A white cotton shawl is added for ceremonial events
or for warmth in the evening. All of their clothing is either bought or [439]
made of materials woven on looms in Comitán or San Bartolomé. The
navy blue skirt, which they say is black, and the red and yellow sash are [435]
sold for 40 to 50 pesos by Ladina vendors who come to town. The blouse is made from two meters of heavy white cotton sold in the local stores or in Teopisca and San Cristóbal. Most prefer the more expensive cotton woven on bed looms in San Bartolomé, but it is not always available.
They embroider the wide bands of yellow and red around the neckline [294]
with embroidery floss sold in the local store. The fringed shawl from Comitán is also sold locally, but is often purchased during the annual fiestas in the town. These items are replaced every two or three years, depending on the wealth of the family. The newer clothing is worn on ceremonial
occasions, and the older clothing is worn every day. Women wear [292]
sandals and hats for protection only when they are firing pottery. For [751]
jewelry they wear bead necklaces, sometimes with crosses attached. Their [301]
hair is braided with ribbons for fiestas, or simply left hanging when they [302]
work.

Men buy a woolen jacket called *kotonču,* which is brought illegally 434
from the Department of Huehuetenango, Guatemala, where it is made, 291
439

434 and sold in Comitán. It is the same as the costume worn by the Indians of
291 that area. A similar garment is made in Comitán but is considered inferior
[439] to the contraband product. Shirts and wrapped trousers made of
coarse cotton are stitched and sold in Teopisca. The trousers are bound
291 with a red woven sash. These items make up the modified costume worn
by most of the boys and men. Men over sixty wear a long, coarsely woven
shirt with a slashed neck made in San Bartolomé. This is caught at the
waist with a woven band and worn over short trousers. In the evening or
during ceremonies the kotonču is always worn. The older men wear
high-backed sandals attached to rubber-tire soles with thongs, while
younger men wear the *huarache* of crossed leather bands secured to a rubber-tire
sole found in many parts of Mexico. Increasingly men are taking
[177] on the western clothing worn by Ladinos—the belted cotton trousers,
shirt, and underclothing sold in the local store and in the neighboring
towns. In 1957, only a half-dozen men, all of them former students in the
boarding school established in Cárdenas' term of office, wore this dress,
but today over twenty middle-aged men and dozens of youths in their
[177] teens wear it. Those who wear modern clothing have substituted a zippered
"air-force" jacket for the kotonču. All men wear factory-made straw
[292] hats, under which, on ceremonial occasions, they wear a red bandanna
bound over the forehead and tied at the nape of the neck. A high-crowned
[794] palm hat with black designs, ordered by the alfereces when they enter office,
[292] used to be woven by a few specialists; now only one man can make
[178] them.

291 The changing styles in men's clothing reflect three stages of acculturation.
177 The older style worn by elders is said to be the costume worn by the
ancestors who live in the cave. Since all of the items are and have for some
time been purchased from outside the town, the changing pattern of consumption—the
change from modified peasant to ladino-style clothing—has
not affected local production.

Girl's wear a machine-embroidered peasant blouse and a mid-calf gathered skirt made of cotton or rayon and purchased in the neighboring towns. They change to the woman's costume when they reach their teens. Boys wear the same clothing as their fathers, except for the old costume. Table 12 shows the cost for these items.

ered to be dirty since the pigs and dogs cannot scavenge the feces. Mothers 000 863
train their children to have bowel movements in the evening when darkness offers them privacy in the houseyard.

Changes in house types in the seven-year period from my first census in 342
1958 to the second in 1964 are tabulated in Table 14. There has been a 177
general improvement in the standards: tile roofs have increased from 1 to 178
20.1 percent. The increase has been at the expense of both wood shingle [125]
(declined 8.3 percent) and of thatch and palm leaf (declined 9.8 percent).

TABLE 14. Types of House Construction

	*1958**		*1964*†	
	Number of houses	*Percent of all houses*	*Number of houses*	*Percent of all houses*
Roofs				
Tile	1	1	58	20
Shingle	27	23	41	14
Thatch or palm	87	76	190	66
Walls				
Board plank	17	15	66	23
Wattle and daub	98	85	223	77
Sweatbath				
Have	60	52	120	42
Have not	54	47	169	58
Unknown	1	1		

* Based on sample of 115 houses.
† Based on total survey of houses in center with 22 unspecified.

[343]

The numbers of houses with wood plank walls has increased from 14.8 percent to 22.8 percent. This is a temporary arrangement, and the planks are usually replaced with wattle and daub, so the increase may simply reflect
new construction. The percentage of houses having sweatbaths has de- 343
clined from 52.1 to 41.5. No new sweatbaths have been made for the last 178
ten years or so, and many of those recorded are not in use.

The changes in housing type reflect the greater prosperity of the town 342
as well as the increasing receptivity to outside influence. The increase in 177
tile roofs means a greater dependency on external markets. Ten years be- 178
fore the final census, a man who put on a tile roof feared the consequences 434 754
of witchcraft.

342
177
178 of witchcraft. Today probably 95 percent of the new roofs are made of tile.
434 Often the old roofs cannot be replaced with tile because the rafters were
[335] not built to support them. One result of the change has been the dependence
on a carpenter to construct the gables, since they have to be lined up
more accurately than they do with thatch or palm roofs.

361 House lots in the town center are preferred to those on the margins. As
351 residents of house sites on the ejido lands at the margins of the town acquire
434 wealth, one of the first things they try to do is acquire a house closer
to the plaza. These lots are smaller, averaging about 500 square meters,
while those farther out average 900 square meters. In a sample measurement
of 100 house lots, the size ranged from 180 to 1,440 square meters,
[554] and the average size was 77 square meters. Considering the advantages of
a large lot in growing chile fruits and corn, the preference for smaller central
lots reveals the strong prestige factor influencing choice.

352 House furnishings include both purchased and homemade items. Sleeping
435 accommodations consist of wooden bedboards, either nailed on a
[513] frame or simply laid on blocks and covered with a straw mat. Woolen
blankets from Comitán are sold locally at a price of 24 pesos or for 20
pesos in San Cristóbal and 18 pesos in Comitán. Most households own
two or three wooden benches which line the walls of the porch and are
made locally. Small chairs are purchased from Chamula carpenters at a
cost of 2 to 4 pesos, as well as a small table costing about 4. A higher table
[778] is provided for the saints' pictures and candle holders, incense burner, and
[322] flower vases or tin cans. Hooks are fashioned from the crotch of trees and
suspended on the house posts. Wooden boxes are bought from Ladino carpenters
415 in San Cristóbal at a cost of 10 to 20 pesos depending on size and
435 workmanship and are used to store clothing. In addition to the homemade
439 water holders, water carriers, comales, strainers, and bowls, handmade
glazed ware from San Cristóbal, factory-made porcelain dishes, metal
cooking pots, knives, and spoons are purchased. Gourds provide serving
[412] ware for ceremonial occasions. Stone grinding platforms and rollers are
purchased in San Cristóbal for about 10 pesos. Two new items have become
435 increasingly popular in the past five years: a metal grinding machine
415 for corn, hand operated and costing from 40 to 60 pesos depending on the
177 size and quality, and a hinged press for tortillas, costing 15 pesos if made

of metal and 10 pesos if made of wood. These are lined with waxed paper, 435 415
which the local storekeeper cuts from cracker-box wrappers and sells for 5 177
cents each.

Electricity, first used in the cooperative store and later in the liquor 365
shops, is now being installed in houses. 83 families had electricity installed
in their homes by 1967. Street lights have been in operation since 1966, al- [651]
though the first attempt to install them was blocked by residents on the
streets to be lighted who did not want to pay the tax of 1 peso per month
per household to meet the cost to the community of 75 pesos a month.
Most people have a flashlight, and lighting in the house is provided by 354
pitch pine or by small kerosene lamps. Candles are used only in ceremo- [416]
nies.

The inventory of items sold in the cooperative store in town includes 444
the most frequently purchased items of consumption. Hardward includes
buckets, hoes, kerosene lamps, batteries, Gillette blades, shotgun bullets,
canned goods such as sardines, chiles, and powdered milk. Packaged foods
include rice, sugar, salt, oatmeal, cornstarch, flour, coffee, biscuits, cookies,
gum, and candy. Beer is sold along with soft drinks and cigarettes. House-
hold supplies include candles, soap, D.D.T. powder, thread, matches, and
kerosene. Medicines dispensed most frequently include sulphur pills, ara-
lin, Desenfriol, Alka-Seltzer, and Sonrisal. Yard goods for shawls, chil-
dren's wraps, and men's clothing are sold along with manufactured shirts,
blouses for girls, and rubber capes. Eggs as well as money are taken in [436]
payment and then sold. Except for one can of Chocomilk, which sat on
the shelves for a year, all of the items are in constant demand, and provide
an index to the level of living and dependency on external markets.

The preferences in changing consumption are limited by communal 434
standards of what is appropriate. I once asked a man who was acquiring 178
more than the usual income by brokerage activities what he would buy 177
with more money. He replied, "I would get more land and cattle." I inter-
rupted to ask what he would do to improve his standard of living. "I
wouldn't get better clothing—what would I need that for? I would get a
house built with good materials like this [the government-built clinic]
with a cement floor. But I couldn't get it now because of envy. When my [156]
children grow up, they [the neighbors] will see them working and maybe

178 I can get one then. Last year I bought a transistor radio for nine hundred
177 and ninety pesos. My wife said she would leave me if I got it because all
[053] the children would get sick. But I got it anyway and no one was sick. I
am stronger than my enemies."

Innovation on the consumption level is adding a stimulus to innovation in economic activities. The successful innovator must invent a rationale for his improved standards of living and then prove that he can survive the possible evil consequences of envy. The process of adoption is one of a shift in the incidence of choices made in the direction of improving levels of living. The new is often incorporated with the old rather than replacing
[252] it. For example, after the rough preparation has been done with the mill, grinding stones are used for the final grinding of corn to get the dough
[415] into the preferred consistency for making tortillas. Tin plates are used along with crockery and gourds. Some items are linked in change: for ex-
[291] ample, tailored pants are worn only with buttoned shirts and belts and with zippered jackets. The old forms are continued in a ceremonial con-
[096] text: kotonču is preferred when a man undertakes an official role, and
[415] gourds are preferred to any other container for ceremonial foods. The technology of production lags behind the changes in consumption that have increased the need for greater income—agricultural tools have not been modified since the colonial period when the wooden plow, metal hoe, machete, and plow used with draft animals were added. Changes in consumption needs rather than in productive technology are expanding the economic horizons of the Indians.

CHOICES AND STRATEGIES IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

241 In agricultural and pottery production, decision-making concerning the use of land and labor resources is controlled not only by a traditional technology but more importantly by a given state of cognitive orientations that determines, in Goodenough's words (1966:54), "what states of affairs they have learned to discern, what they believe to be the relations between them, and what they understand to be the processes by which one state can be transformed into another." Agriculturalists have a fine perception

of what seeds grow best in which soils. Good, fast-growing seed is not 241
sowed indiscriminately but is limited to use on more fertile irrigated 242
lands. The size of a family's holdings is the primary factor in deciding
what proportion of the three major crops—corn, beans, and wheat—they [423]
will grow. Where they grow each of these crops depends upon the quality of the soil categorized by topological criteria, consistency, color, and proved fertility. Decline in productivity is attributed to wearing out of soil fertility because of overuse as well as to loss of the soul of crops. The first explanation leads to adaptive behavior, in which the land is "rested" or turned over to cattle grazing, and to crop rotation, alternating wheat and corn crops. The second explanation leads to adjustive behavior in which the agriculturalist takes care of ceremonial obligations to the saints and to the "owner of the milpa."

The scheduling of activities is determined by the knowledge of time required 241
for maturing of the crop and by expectations concerning seasonal
fluctuations as they affect rainfall. Although the farmers have some control
over water supply through irrigation, dependence on rainfall for the nonirrigated [782]
fields means that sporadic appeals to the ancestors or saints are [776]
made to ensure rain in the growing period. These rituals are not as integrated [769]
in the agricultural production cycle as they are in the neighboring [171]
towns of Chamula and Oxchuk or in the colonia of San Vicente where irrigation facilities are lacking.

Traditional techniques of pottery production are maintained by a tightly 323
organized schema of procedures which allows for little variation in technique or form. Learning of productive techniques is facilitated by a fine segmentation of tasks. Knowledge of local clays and tempering has been stabilized for at least five hundred years of occupation in this area. Women's work is entirely lacking in rituals to ensure the success of their efforts.

These given sets of cognitive orientations in economic activities do not 241
exclude the possibility of considering new ways or means of doing things. 177
Agriculturalists have tried the new seed introduced by agronomists, but 178
have found them wanting in their resistance to mold, in the case of corn, and in their portability, in the case of wheat. Fertilizers have been tried, but the credit costs proved too high for the agriculturalists to continue.
Women were willing to try a kiln in place of open firing, but either the 177
model introduced was faulty or they were not 323
taught to use it properly.

000 model introduced was faulty or they were not taught to use it properly.
241 Notions about the supernatural relation between souls of crops, man, and
774 the saints do not interfere with experimentation or adaptation at the in-
776 strumental level. Obligations with respect to them are carried on as a sup-
178 plement to other practical measures.

The organization of men's work in agriculture contrasts with that of
462 women's work in pottery. Men's work, when performed cooperatively by
461 two or more of an extended household or exchange labor team, is mechan-
241 ically organized, in Durkheim's terminology. Each of the men does the
323 same task, working closely in the rows of the milpa. Women's work groups are organically organized since segmentation of the pottery production in the stages described above makes possible specialization within a domestic production group including two or more women. Preferences and special abilities can be taken into account. The potters with more experience do the jobs which require more judgement and skill, such as mixing the clay or making the bases, and then the work is passed on to less proficient workers. Or an older woman can leave the more strenuous tasks, such as mixing clay or building up the sides of the larger pots, to younger women and perform the lighter tasks, such as putting on the neck and handles.

000 These differences in the organization of male and female work tasks suggest the need for a reformulation of the classification of whole societies as organically or mechanically integrated. In assessing the potential for change, internal variations in the organization of production might provide the clues for implementing development programs.

462 The division of labor according to sex is nearly absolute: women do not
241 learn to work in the milpa nor do men learn to make pottery or perform
323 household tasks. However, women will gather firewood, and men will
transport clay (although they do not collect the clay deposits in balls) and
help in firing pottery. Women can live without men in the household
462 economy of the town, but men cannot live without women. This is be-
464 cause male labor is a market commodity while female labor in household
736 activities is not. A widow can hire a man to work her fields, but a man
562 cannot hire a cook. If he is widowed, he must remarry, move into his

Chapter 3

New Economic Activities

43 The role of the Indian in the regional and national economy is being
44 shaped more and more by supralocal institutions in public and private en-
177 terprises. The Indians of Tzoˀontahal have mobilized their own resources
178 to incorporate these opportunities. In this they reveal a selective perception of the economic and social advantages of innovation and a tendency to translate form and function into a local idiom. The success of planning at national or regional levels depends upon incorporation of projects at local levels, while the survival of the local group depends upon acceptance of
178 the new opportunities to absorb rising populations.

177 The major institutional settings in which innovation is occurring are
423 (1) the ejido program, (2) employment in agricultural and nonagricul-
464 tural enterprises outside of the community, and (3) economic enterprises
43 originating within the community. My discussion of the economic potential of the local community to adapt to change will be organized in terms of these settings.

The Economic Potential of the Ejido

423

Mexico's ejido program, as one of the oldest and most extensive attempts at land reform in the hemisphere, provides a basis for assessing the economic potential of such programs. Here I shall consider only the effects of ejido administration in the community and what this case illustrates of the potential for development in the future.

Manuel Giraul (quoted in de la Peña 1951:327) summarizes the negative effects of the ejido program:

> In Mexico, the ejido system constitutes an institutionalized block to the reform of the social and economic structure; it corresponds to a

T
661 *us 65 pesos per bag. It was the first time we had used it and we had very*
652 *good crops. We got together and decided not to pay for the fertilizer. We*
621 *called the bank agents and requested that we be relieved of the charge be-*
571 *cause the crops had failed. We showed him a milpa which is a low plot*
241 *that is too wet for a good crop. We just throw the seed there, but don't*
T *work on it because it isn't worth the trouble.*
[693] *We went to a lawyer in Tuxtla. He told us the bank would have to pay*
for the fertilizer since they had promised it. The lawyer is the helper of
the campesinos [*poor farmers*].

T
178 Several points of significance can be noted in this case: (1) the Indians
661 are reluctant to take credit risks because of unfortunate experiences in the
621 past; (2) they react to deception with their own deceptions, showing the
57 engineer the land which had not only not been fertilized but had never
[426] been weeded or cared for; and (3) they seek professional legal aid in deal-
[693] ing with government agents in order to equalize the contest in which they
T feel disadvantaged. These first two behavioral syndromes are culturally
[177] conditioned responses; the third represents an innovation. By seeking
professional aid for which they pay a fee, the Indians are breaking the mo-
[178] nopoly of power held by the caciques to whom they were formerly bound
in a network of personal obligations incurred in such transactions.

M Recent colonization of national lands since the 1950s has introduced a
423 new kind of ejido settlement. Since most of the lands contiguous to settled
361 towns were absorbed in the early days of the ejido grant, movement has
been into lands outside the domain of established centers. This sponta-
M neous colonization of unexploited land has followed the penetration of
[491] new highways in Quintana Roo, Campeche, Chiapas, Tabasco, and Vera
Cruz (de la Peña 1951:348). In defense of their rights to the new lands, the
M
423 colonists, often of diverse origins, develop a political consciousness. Mesti-
621 zos and Indians of different towns work together in securing official ejido
563 status for their lands. Acculturation to the national language and ways of
[197] life is much greater in these mixed centers than in the settled populations
that were part of the original ejido tracts. Consciousness of their rights
M
641 under national law and independence from traditional loyalties means that
563 these new settlements may be the basis for welding Indians into the na-

273
472 cause of the limited capital involved and the fear of discovery with the ex-
pansion of the enterprise. A loose syndicate of distillers provides an insur-
273 ance protection by raising fines for members who are apprehended by fed-
548 eral agents. Security measures are taken to avoid discovery, and the pres-
661 ence of a federal agent is announced in Tzeltal on the loudspeaker system
of one of the bars. One federal agent is on the payroll of the four operat-
ing bar owners, who give him 5 pesos a week to avoid legal action on the
sale of contraband liquor. Individual distillers pay the tariff of 10 pesos or
two liters of liquor a year to the civil officials and to the ejido commission,
a tariff justified by the fact that they use wood from communally owned
land to cook the sugar. The syndicate is a community-wide organization,
mobilized in emergencies only.

THE NEW SOCIAL RESOURCES

177 In the course of operating the new enterprises, knowledge of and experi-
• 178 ence with supralocal institutions and agents are developing social re-
43 sources in (1) entrepreneurship, (2) management of capital and credit,
44 (3) knowledge of markets, and (4) dealing with government agencies. In
621 entering into these new economic activities, the Indians have not lost a
156 sense of belonging to the local community. Self-identification as poor, in-
digenous farmers is both a screen of protection and a means of ensuring
continuity with local control systems.

472 *Entrepreneurship.* Local entrepreneurs explain their motivation in
621 a rhetoric which emphasizes their interest in community welfare. This val-
156 idates entering into nontraditional activities, but retaining their position in
local society inhibits the expansions of their activities. The case of Santos,
159 the promoter of the trucking cooperative is instructive. Santos had picked
472 up some accounting techniques while he served in the army in Mi-
621 choacán. He returned to the village because his father walked from Chia-
45 pas to Michoacán to tell him he should come back and get married. When
he returned, he kept careful account of his costs and returns from the
milpa. He realized soon that it wasn't "worth his work" (the Indian has
not as yet learned the idiom or the value system which goes into the

usual, and seeing the pesos, picked them up. The "spirit of the money" left 426 the village forever. The story reveals not only the sense of deprivation Indians 609 feel in losing wealth to Ladinos (historically land the Indians had 538 lost through fraud or legal trickery during the Porfirio Diaz period), but also their realization of their own responsibility for letting their assets slip out of their control.

Payment of interest on money borrowed is justified in the calculations 426 of the Indians for loans made within as well as outside of the community. 621 Interest, called *shol tak'in*, or "head" of money, makes it possible for the 602 borrower to work, and thus to earn, so the "owner" has the right to charge for the use. The rate on loans made within the pueblo has risen from 2 or 3 pesos a month for 100 pesos to 5 pesos, thus equalizing the rate with that charged in the neighboring Ladino town. The same rate is applied between relatives as nonkin. The advantage of intracommunity borrowing is that the lender does not demand an immediate return, or as high security. Ladinos of the neighboring town tend to demand items of greater value than the debt held as security—one Ladino held title to land worth 1,000 pesos for a 50-peso debt, and threatened to foreclose. Within the [571] pueblo, security of about the same value as the loan is asked except in the case of neighbors and relatives who can be reminded every day of the debt. And they are.

Markets. In marketing, the Indians of Tzoʔontahal have neither 442 extended nor gained control over the selling and buying operations that 443 have been pursued since before the opening of the Pan-American Highway 178 in 1955. The pottery which is produced locally was formerly carried 323 on horseback to the smaller towns within a radius of fifty miles. The pot- 442 tery was marketed directly by the men of the household which produced 443 it, with no specialization in trading by commercial travelers, as had hap- [492] pened in the Zapotec and other areas of Mexico. Since the penetration of [462] the Pan-American Highway, the men take the pottery produced in their [494] households by bus or on the trucks to either San Cristóbal or Comitán. This tends to polarize trading operations and dry up the traffic into small towns not connected by the highway. As a result, the wholesale trade in San Cristóbal and Comitán has increased in the past decade, with dealers

323
178 coming from the smaller towns to buy. The Indians still bring pottery to
442 sell retail in towns that they visit during a fiesta. One of these is the barrio
443 of Lok'ibal in the município of Villa Carranza, where people go on the
third Friday of Lent to get holy water from the spring.

The Indians have not taken advantage of the truck to buy pottery wholesale and market it directly in the smaller towns, selling from the truck in the plaza as some of the wholesale fruit truckers do. Another operation which they have failed to profit from is buying the wheat harvest and selling to government warehouses, as some of the Ladino truckers do.

44 Lack of capital is the major reason for failure to exploit these opportunities.
471 In marketing the contraband liquor, which is the most flourishing of
273 the new enterprises, the Indians have not yet entered into the external
443 markets except in the case of one young unmarried mother. Wholesale
434 purchases are made by Ladinos, primarily women, from other towns who
resell the liquor in Comitán and on the coast. There is however, a well-developed
[675] home market since all contracts are sealed with the offering of liquor,
[681] the "gift of the gods," all court fines are paid in liquor, and the main
[583] gift in betrothal is liquor. The cantinas with phonograph players opened
[275] by the cooperatives operate very successfully on Saturday night and during
[216] fiestas. The internal market for liquor is controlled by a syndicate of the
[548] forty-two independent liquor distillers. The price is set at 4 pesos per liter
[435] for all buyers, with the buyer providing the bottle.

Agricultural production is not geared to a market, and Indians do not
241 take advantage of fluctuations in price. Wheat yields a lower return per
442 unit of land than corn, but it is grown for two reasons: the Indians believe
443 that crop rotation of corn and wheat prevents depletion of the soil, and
wheat requires less work since no cultivation is needed. Wheat is a cash
crop and none of it is milled or consumed directly in town. Poor families
sell their wheat "standing" to Teopisca truckers. The price given the
[435] grower is usually about 90 pesos per hundred kilograms, and it is resold at
110 or 120 pesos in Tuxtla or to the government storehouses. Wheat is
sometimes brought directly to San Cristóbal millers who give 120 per hundred
kilograms. Corn is primarily a subsistence crop when grown in the
center. Corn grown in hot country ejido land is now sold in Teopisca and
[489] San Cristóbal. The local truck cooperative has a special permit which gives

474 The strategies the cooperative members have developed in their frequent
648 tangles with state police illustrate the combination of custom and innova-
661 tion. When caught red-handed, they may respond by playing the stereo-
type Indian role. "We don't know anything. We are just poor Indians.
How do you expect us to do what the law says?" This is hard for the La-
dino authorities to resist, since it feeds their own sense of superiority. But
it does not always work, and so the Indians have devised secondary re-
sources. They put the departmental police at each terminal of their usual
route between Las Casas and Comitán on a regular monthly mordida pay-
[693] roll of 50 pesos each. When trying to extend their operations, they hire a
lawyer. A recent coup has been the acquisition of a permit to truck corn
from Villa las Rosas and other ejido settlements that have been recently
colonized. The appeal was made on the basis that they are a nonprofit
cooperative of ejidatarios. With the permit, they now undercut the price of
their own competitors in the town as well as of the large companies. Law-
474 yers are beginning to advertise themselves in newspapers as "Friends of
693 the Indians" and are in some cases specializing in this new patronage,
which they receive from other communities as well as Tzoʔontahal. The
professional relationship bypasses personal ties which formerly limited the
development of Indian leadership.

177 The self-development occurring in Tzoʔontahal may appear paradoxical
178 if we do not understand the internal dynamics by which change is con-
474 tained within an existing equilibrium. The cooperative association has
621 been adopted as a technique for socializing the risk of making a profit.
648 The truck, although currently used in an uneconomic operation, is a sym-
[493] bol of power in the struggle for a position in the regional markets and in
the intracommunity factional strifes. The usual patron-client system is
being reversed as the Indian puts the Ladino on his payroll to secure eva-
sion from the law. In the changes which are occuring, the defensive struc-
ture of the corporate community is a means by which the Indians are en-
tering into national life not on the lowest rung of the social ladder, but on
terms they are setting for themselves. In the new enterprises, the Indians
combine old ploys with new strategies. Confronted with legal threats from
the outside world, they play the colonial game of defensive ignorance.

When this fails, they turn to the professional help of lawyers rather than 177
to the old caciques with whom they had formerly maintained patron-client 178
relations. The traditional structural alignment of upper and lower 474
barrios is retained as the basis for organizing the growing cattle herds, but 693
the cooperative provides flexibility and power for developing new enterprises. 621

The minimal changes in the material environment and the technology 177
of the peasantry are countered by the development of social resources 178
which should facilitate Indian integration in the wider society. In operating 472
the new enterprises independently of Ladino control, they are developing entrepreneurial skills and an awareness of the relationship between capital and profit. The restriction of their operations to nonproductive use of capital for profit, such as buying crops at harvest and reselling as the price rises, reveals the limited dynamics of intracommunal development. The town will look to the regional and national networks for fundamental changes in its economy.

The fear of exciting envy acts as a brake on productive activity and the 626
enjoyment of improved consumption resulting from wealth. Santos' death 182
is a symbolic warning to others who would follow in his footsteps. An earlier 472
case occurred when the ejido land grants were made in the 30s: 556

> *The brothers Ča?iletik became "very rich" as a result of careful operation* 556
> *of their ejido and privately owned land. They owned ten pair of oxen* 433
> *and about fifty horses. When they brought in their crops on horseback, it* 423
> *looked like a line of ants. They built a good house in Alkob', and a good* 621
> *threshing shelter. The people of the town began to talk about getting* 626
> *them off the land. The ejido commissioner took their land away and* 159
> *turned it over to others in the town. Until this day, the brothers Ča?iletik are without land. Now they do no more than work like other men. They live poorly. All their cattle and horses are sold.*

The organization of the cooperatives is one means of diverting envy directed 474
against individuals and permitting some increase in productive efforts, 182
but the society still lacks the means of validating higher consumption 626
standards. The richest man in town eats better than his neighbors, 556
000

556
626 but his style of living is indistinguishable from theirs. The only difference
[23[] is the larger number of dogs he[1] keeps to guard his wealth stored in the
form of surplus crops in the eaves of his house.

177 The kind of economic change occurring in Tzoʔontahal fits the model
178 of a moving equilibrium. Tightly controlled behavioral schema preserve
433 the traditional productive activities in pottery and agriculture. They pro-
434 vide the framework into which the new enterprises are fit. Increasing de-
621 pendence of cosumption choices on external markets is slowly transform-
323 ing the content but not the pattern of community life. This kind of change is limited to societies that form a distinct corporate group. In an open society where many alternatives are available, the painful process of accommodation of the new to a customary pattern would probably not be undertaken given the tendency for social change to follow the course of least resistence. The absorption of economic innovation in Tzoʔontahal illustrates the ability of closed corporate communities to participate in commercial undertakings and reformulate them to fit their own pattern.

[1] [i.e., the richest man in town. - Analyst]

591 593 [192] parents. This role is institutionalized and the youngest child is referred to as *k'oš*, the last one.

591 593 182 The choice of residence after marriage is influenced by the following factors:

1. The couple live with whatever family has less pressure from immature siblings remaining in the household. If there is no other child in one family, there is a strong likelihood that the new family will remain in that household.
2. 591 182 434 If there is any wealth difference, the couple tends to live with the richer family. "Wealthy" families prefer to have their children live near them and will make an effort to build a house within their compound or nearby.

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TABLE 15. Trends in Household Composition, 1958–1964

	Alannantik		*Ahk'olnantik*		*Total*	
Family type	*No. of families*	*Percent of total families*	*No. of families*	*Percent of total families*	*No. of families*	*Percent of total families*
Remained the same						
Nuclear	49	76	38	57	87	67
Virilocal	7	11	11	16	18	14
Uxorilocal	4	6	7	11	11	9
Joint sib	1	2	1	2	2	1
Grandparent-grandchild	1	2	2	3	3	2
Incomplete	2	3	7	11	9	7
Total	64	100	66	100	130	100
Percent of all families		44		34		39
New families created						
Nuclear	16	89	48	88	64	88
Uxorilocal	1	5.5	1	2	2	3
Incomplete	1	5.5	6	10	7	9
Total	18	100	55	100	73	100
Percent of all families		12		28		21
Families which changed •	64	44	74	38	138	40
Total number of families	146	100	195	100	341	100

• Direction of change indicated in Table 16.

Changes in the household composition in the period from 1958 to 1964 between the two censuses I made in the field indicate some of the trends toward nuclear family units or bilaterally-rather than predominantly patrilineally-extended units (Tables 15 and 16). Comparisons are made between the same household in each period. Comparison of family forms in the six-year period indicates a high rate of change, with 39 percent remaining the same and 40 percent changing. The remaining 21 percent are the newly created families. The direction of change favors nuclear families (40 cases or 29 percent of changes) and virilocal forms (27 cases or 20 percent of changes). Nuclear families were the most stable, with 62 remaining the same and 62 changing to another form. This contrasts with uxorilocal households which are the least stable, with 11 cases remaining the same and 23 changing, and virilocal households which follow a similar pattern with 14 cases remaining the same and 25 changing. Nuclear families account for 88 percent of the new families created by marriage in the period studied. The trend is toward a greater proportion of nuclear families, as measured by the various indices.

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TABLE 16. Direction of Change in Household Composition, 1958–1964

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	Alannantik		*Ahk'olnantik*		*Total*	
Family type	*No. of families*	*Percent of total families*	*No. of families*	*Percent of total families*	*No. of families*	*Percent of total families*
Change to nuclear from						
Virilocal	14	22	4	5	18	13
Uxorilocal	5	8	9	12	14	10
Joint sib			1	1	1	1
Grandparent-Grandchild			1	1	1	1
Incomplete	1	2	3	4	4	3
Unknown			2	3	2	1
Total	20	32	20	26	40	29
Change to virilocal from						
Nuclear	8	12	10	14	18	13
Uxorilocal	2	3	1	1	3	2
Joint sib			1	1	1	1
Incomplete	1	2	4	5	5	4
Total	11	17	16	21	27	20

(cont.)

[P.106]

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Family type	*Alannantik̦* *No. of families*	*Alannantik̦* *Percent of total families*	*Ahk̦'olnantik̦* *No. of families*	*Ahk̦'olnantik̦* *Percent of total families*	*Total* *No. of families*	*Total* *Percent of total families*
Change to uxorilocal from						
Nuclear	4	6	4	5	8	6
Virilocal	1	2	1	1.5	2	1
Joint sib			1	1.5	1	.7
Grandparent-grandchild			1	1.5	1	.7
Incomplete			1	1.5	1	.7
Unknown			1	1.5	1	.7
Total	5	8	9	12.5	14	10
Change to joint sib from						
Nuclear	1	2			1	.7
Virilocal			1	1.5	1	.7
Uxorilocal			1	1.5	1	.7
Total	1	2	2	3	3	2
Change to grandparent-grandchild from						
Nuclear			1	1.5	1	.7
Total			1	1.5	1	1
Change to incomplete from						
Nuclear	8	12	4	5	12	9
Virilocal	1	2	1	1.5	2	1.4
Uxorilocal	2	3	1	1.5	3	2
Joint sib	1	2			1	1
Unknown			2	3	2	1.4
Total	12	19	8	11	20	15
Change to disintegrated from						
Nuclear	11	17	10	14	21	15
Virilocal	2	3			2	1.4
Uxorilocal			2	3	2	1.4
Grandparent-grandchild			2	3	2	1.4
Incomplete	1	2	4	5	5	4
Total	14	22	18	25	32	23
Change to avunculocal from						
Nuclear	1	2			1	1
Total	64	100	74	100	138	100

Chapter 6

Curing and the Curers

Sickness is a sign of upset relations between the spirits or people and those 753
of relatives, neighbors, or places. In the curing ritual, the curers not only 756
treat the disease, but also try to bring about spiritual readjustment by 182
dramatizing the ill effects of animosity. Because they claim to be able to [578]
counteract witchcraft, the curers exercise a great deal of power. This
power is limited by institutional requirements controlling entry into the
profession and exercise of their skill and knowledge. The breakdown in
the authority of elder curers during my study of the community, and their [178]
attempts to reinstate themselves, made explicit some of the structural principles
of the institution.

THE CURING HIERARCHY 756

Recruitment into the hierarchy. Until the 1950s, each side of the 621
dual division had an age-ranked order of curers and recognized the leadership 178
of a single elder, called *statal ʔuʔul.* The older, more experienced curers,
called the *b'ank̡ilal,* or elder brothers, had authority over the novice
curers, called the *ʔihtz'inal,* or younger brothers. With the breakdown of
the hierarchy during my stay, this distinction was becoming less clear. In
1964 there were seven curers in Alannantik and six in Ahk'olnantik; on a [114]
return visit I made in 1967, their numbers had been reduced by homicide
and exile to five in Alannantik and five in Ahk'olnantik.

Entry into the profession occurs during an epidemic when the civil authority 756
calls upon the curers to gather in the town hall to determine who 731
is bringing the "heat" that causes death from disease. The curers decide
whether there are any promising young men who have the third soul,
swayohel, which gives them the ability to cure. If a young man is deemed

"He looked for trouble!" Domingo replied. 159
I said, "You killed my husband!" 756
He said, "It was not I! It was not I!" 578
It doesn't serve to enter curing early. People will kill you right away. 683
Another young man wanted to enter. The curers did not permit him since they said he was a witch. People heard he was a witch, and they killed him. He was the same age as my husband [*about twenty-seven*].

The curers who have survived to an old age were introduced into the profession by an elder relative. They choose their clients carefully, refusing to cure a man who is on the point of death, and remaining within their own section of the dual division. These rules of survival are ignored by some of the younger men who wish to impress their elders with their powers. 756 [621]

The changing image of the curers. The curers of today are unfavorably compared with those of the past who used their power for good. The prototype of the old curer was the fearful Tatik Čaʔuk, Lord of the Lightning, possibly a local manifestation of the Maya god Chac.[2] The dialectic of power is exemplified in his control over beneficial and destructive forces. His beneficence is demonstrated in his ability to bring rain to crops, while his vengeance is revealed in lightning bolts which can kill people and destroy houses. Anyone who is struck by lightning is believed to have had some sin for which the Tatik Čaʔuk has punished him. His destructive force is equated with a rifle—called "the elder brother of the Lord of Lightning"—and with the "heat" which brings death in illnesses. His habitation is believed to be the Cave of the Star where the heat which causes epidemics is found. 756 776 [178]

The curers were intermediaries for the Tatik Čaʔuk in their control over both destructive and beneficial forces. Formerly, the swayohel of the curers patrolled the streets of the town to prevent the entry of evildoers bringing heat. It is in this role that they are referred to as me'iltatil. If an epidemic occurred, the two leading curers from each side of the town con- 756 731

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[2] In other Tzeltal- and Tzotzil-speaking communities, the god Čaʔuk is named as the chief figure from pre-Conquest theology (Hermitte 1964, Holland 1963:93). [171]

756 sulted with each other to determine who was bringing in the heat. They
731 privately disposed of the evil by causing the evildoer to die of an illness.
[627] At the time of my stay, suspicion of the curers meant that a public hearing was held in the town hall to determine who the guilty person was; usually one of the curers themselves was suspected (Chapter 9).

756 The curers formerly demonstrated their beneficial power by bringing
796 rain during a fiesta held in the cave of the ancestors. This is described by
778 an informant:

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[794] *When the pueblo lacked rain in the growing season of corn in May and June, the leading curers went with the other curers, the fiscal, the alfereces, the mayordomos, and the women prayer-reciters to the cave. All the women carried candles of a peso or fifty-cent size and incense burners. They drank a great deal of liquor at the mouth of the cave and then entered to dance. The mayordomos played the guitar, the drum, and flute as the women danced and the curers prayed to the meʔtiktatik. There used to be a spring in this cave, people say, and the ancestors granted water from it when they were given a fiesta.*

The last fiesta for rain occurred about 1950. The whole town contributed two pesos for the liquor and candles. The leading curer then was Juliano, a man recognized for his powers in curing and in bringing rain. He told the people that he spoke to the meʔtiktatik who, he said, were dressed in the old style [a shirt worn over short cotton pants still used by older men of the town, and the handwoven hat worn by alfereces today]. The curers told the people that it would rain, and the afternoon of the fiesta, it came down hard.

178 There is no longer faith that the ancestors live in the cave, nor that the
769 present curers could speak to them if they did.

756 The growing discontent with the curers, the suspicion that they are re-
756 sponsible for much of the witchcraft, is reflected in the account of an older
754 informant.
[178]

[774] *The curer O. K. told me that the curers ate the spirits of sick people who were going to die. The sick people would come to ask the curers for*

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"You won't be afraid if I show it?" Nicolás asked. He then flipped his kotonču four times and a black bull appeared. It disappeared, and they drank some more. Nicolás made the bull appear again.

Nicolás was ejido commissioner when I was president. We began to talk one day in the cabildo. "Who is the strongest of all the curers?" we asked. One said that now it was the elder brother Nicolás.

Čiko turned to Nico and said, "Tell us who is the strongest of all who know curing." Nico replied, "Ah, you want to hear. There is no one who is strong as the dead Mamal Komesil [elder Gomez] and I." Čiko said, "Mam D. is good."

"Less so," said Nico. "One time we tested it. I took out a sheep and a black dog. He [D.] took out a goat and a pig, and we ordered the animals to run. And I saw that the swayohel of D. could not run. Mine ran well, and his couldn't arrive before mine. It was then that I saw he was not as strong."

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Formerly, when bullfights were held in the town as a feature of the fiesta of Santiago, curers took the great risk of riding the backs of the bulls to demonstrate their bravery. The fight became a symbolic defiance of culturally instilled fears. The fights are organized in this fashion: one man mounts the bull which has no saddle, bridle, or grip of any kind. His feet are tied under the belly of the bull, which increases the hazard if he is thrown since he can easily be dragged under the hooves of the bull. A man stands with a cape before the bull, trying to unseat his opponent. The curer Minko regularly entered the fights as a rider. He drank copiously before mounting the bull. He himself would try to goad the bull into jumping by leaning backward and biting its tail or kicking its sides. People rated even more highly than Minko's performance that of another curer, Bon, who, they said, never even shook when he climbed onto the bull as did Minko. They realized that Minko needed the liquor to face the threat of being crushed by the hooves of the bull, but that Bon was beyond fear. In these displays of fearlessness, some of the curers enjoy a sense of power and freedom from the inhibitions conditioning the behavior of ordinary men.

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Competition and the assertion of power among the younger curers is

symptomatic of the present breakdown in the hierarchical controls which formerly maintained the authority of elder curers. Informants say that in the old days there was no such competition, and the leadership of the elder curers was unchallenged. 756 178 578

Another clue to the personality of the curer can be seen in the statement of a young curer, who expressed in a kind of stream-of-consciousness style the fears and worries that plague him. After responding to the questioning about what he did when he cured, he proceeded to talk of his own concerns as he cured patients: 756 156

> *And when I arrive at Pahaltón* [*curing spring*], *I set aside my hat and blanket so that they do not get burned. If a dog should come and chew my sandals or if I should leave them outside the house where I am curing and a house rat chews them, then it will cost me thirty pesos to buy a new pair. When I come out late at night, a cat spirit sometimes appears on the road, and I throw a stone at it so it will not carry off my spirit; or a dog comes and I must beat him with my hand because I have no machete with me, or I must throw a broken bottle at the devil. When I get home, I take off my jacket and hat and go to sleep. My woman must tie up the sandals with a string on the rafters so that the rat will not eat them. Then it is the woman's fault if the devil dog gets them.*
>
> *Late at night the spirits of the curers come to play and go at cock's crow. And at two o'clock the spirit of a sheep comes out with the devil, and these spirits do not go to sleep in their house until dawn. And if they* [*the curers' spirits*] *arrive in bed drunk and take off their huaraches and bother their wife she will put them in prison and then they have to pay a fine of two liters of the "gift"* [*liquor*] *and one handful of cigarettes. If their woman leaves the curers and they come out of prison, then if they do the same thing again, they send then to Santo Domingo. In prison they make net bags and if they have a wife, she goes and gives them tortillas and coffee. If their wife or father and mother help and give money, then they can pay for a lawyer and get out. Or if they have a daughter, then they receive the gift of a suitor and eat the bread.*[3] *Later there will come the chicken and sweet liquor and trago, and then she will marry. Later* [776]

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[3] "Eating the bread" signifies that the betrothal negotiations are accepted. [584]

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156
they will go to the church wedding. The parents of the couple embrace the godparents. They go dance in the house.

The paranoic fantasies of this young curer, a man in his early thirties, characterize the world of fears, both real and demonic, which the curers sometimes manipulate and by which they are sometimes victimized. The
756 young curers in their thirties and forties tend to have more domestic dis-
156 putes than most men in town. Emilio, a man in his forties who has been
593 trying to assert his stature as leading curer of Alannantik since his prede-
578 cessor was killed for witchcraft, was deserted by his wife. She fled to a neighbor's house. In a drunken rage, he tried to burn it to the ground. When his attempt failed, he threatened to bring "heat" from the Cave of the Star to cause an epidemic after which, he said, he would "eat the souls
756 of the children by the dozen." In the line of duty, curers are often re-
273 quired to get drunk, and drunkenness loosens the cautions which control
156 behavior. Gloating in the power of their swayoheles, there seems to be no limit to the threats or acts they commit. While drinking has probably al-
[154] ways been part of curing ceremonies, the behavior noted in the cases described seems to be a response to the growing insecurity on the part of the curers about their status.

756 The curer reveals in his speech and acts the motivation of power. In
156 Tzo?ontahal, power means freedom from one's own fears as well as from the human and supernatural sanctions imposed on those who ignore the norms governing behavior. The proof of his power lies in the ability to inspire fear in others. For this reason, the curer brags of the evil deeds he has committed or is capable of doing, even though this may bring about his own destruction.

Curing Behavior

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[192] In their role as "doctors" for the individual patient, curers are referred
[554] to as *?u?ul* and are addressed with the honorific title *tatin*. Despite the de-
[178] clining belief in their guardianship function, there has been a retention of belief in their power to overcome witchcraft. Only the curer, because he possesses a swayohel, can deal with illness caused by witchcraft. Even if

Sometimes a colicky baby
755 may become the focus of a curing ceremony designed to "cure" the conflict
753 between husband and wife. In one case, the parents of a healthy young
593 wife separated from her husband staged a curing ceremony to dramatize
182 her marital plight to the in-laws.
578

The breakdown of the curing hierarchy and the recruitment procedures
178 which were maintained by the elder leaders (see Chapter 10) has led to a
756 reevaluation of the role of the curers in the community. They have lost
608 their position as meʔiltatil representing the ancestors who guard over the
754 community. Curers are increasingly being accused of sorcery, and over ten
[627] of them have been killed in the past decade as witches (Nash, J. 1967).
Paradoxically, it is the belief in their evil power which leads to their persisting role in the society. Clients feel that the more evil the curer is, the more able he is to combat evil. In a community dominated by belief in witchcraft, they are both feared and valued for their ability to control it. From a position as arbiters of morality, they have become the chief targets as deviants from the moral code. Despite the loss of confidence in curers as guardians, they are still called upon to fight the evil of witchcraft, and nearly every day a ritual is performed. The regimen of the curing ritual
[755 has not been upset by the undermining of the curers' position. Tied to a
278] diagnostic system emphasizing the state of the patient's social relations, the
same procedures are carried out even when modern medicines are used.

753 In curing practices, the Indian sees himself as the key figure in the
156 drama of his own self-victimization. His illnesses come from within his
own world, usually from within his family or close neighborhood. They are a mark of guilt for having excited the envy or hatred of associates. While the Indian is often portrayed in the role of passive victim to outside domination, in his own self-projection he sees himself dominated by powers within the community. Greater participation and equality in the wider society may in the future release him from these fear-provoking figures in his own environment.

Chapter 7

The Formal Organization of Local Government

The formal organization of civil and religious offices in Tzoʔontahal is 621
based on the pattern of a locally independent, democratically elected 177
officialdom introduced by the Spaniards. Variations in the pattern from 178
that of other towns of the highlands have resulted from differences of interpretation of the functions, the range of power, and the course of succession of offices. This flexibility has preserved structural continuity as organizational adjustments are made. The Indians have transformed an alien governing mechanism into one that meets their changing needs and contributes to their independence in the modern world.

The independence of the local township has a base in the pre-Conquest 632
social organization of Chiapas. Robert Adams (1961:347) has noted the 178
absence of architectural or other features indicative of functional specialization that would arise in a politically integrated region. At the time of 175
the Conquest, Chiapas was divided into warring principalities, revealing 632
the extreme political fragmentation of the area (Calnek 1962:8). Each 628
town was divided from the neighboring town by *mojones*, hilled-up [131]
boundaries (ibid:36). A minimum of political unity was achieved by holding [621]
certain towns subject to the dominance of others (ibid:27); local autonomy [428]
persisted, however, in the administration of landholding as a community enterprise.

During the colonial period the Spanish Crown established the independence 175
of towns directly under their control and provided them with a civil-religious 632
hierarchy which has persisted as the form of government to the 177
present (Carrasco 1961: Wolf 1957b). 621

Comparative studies of the civil-religious hierarchy indicate the range of 171
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hall, but always appear at major ceremonies and at the inauguration of the 621
new officials. Residents of the barrios and colonias can never rise to any 561
position above that of assistant judge, but once they have served in this [693]
post they may become principales in their own localities. One week the
first regidor from Ahk'olnantik serves with the third regidor from Alannantik,
and the next week the second regidor from Ahk'olnantik serves
with the fourth regidor from Alannantik. The ten police are ranked in [625]
five levels with representatives from each side at every level in the series
except for the fourth level, which is occupied by police from the barrios.

These civil officials, called as a group the *huʔeletik̡*, those who are "able" 621
(in control), constitute the traditional ladder of the hierarchy. To reach a [192]
high post, an official must first pass through each of the lower positions in
the hierarchy. Outside of this ranked hierarchy, the posts of president and [212]
síndico are occupied by young men who are able to read, write, and speak [191]
fluently in Spanish. Literacy was, until the present generation, limited to a [177]
few men in their thirties. With increasing literacy, the competition for [178]
these posts is growing.[2] Men who have such skills are called upon as signers
of official documents and are called *firmanetik̡*.

Also existing outside of the traditional hierarchy is the post of secretary [464]
which had, until 1965, been occupied by a Ladino. This was the only post [563]
which was paid; it also provided opportunity for earning extra income by [178]
preparing "acts," or official documents, and fines from court cases. The
present incumbent is an Indian of Alannantik.

Because Tzoʔontahal's hierarchy is still a linked series of civil and reli- 794
gious posts, the structure of the civil hierarchy cannot be considered independently from that of the religious hierarchy. The major segments of the religious hierarchy are the *martomaetik̡*, mayordomos or caretakers, and *alperesetik̡*, alfereces or captains of the fiestas. The internal ranking of the sixteen mayordomos depends on the number of religious posts the incumbent has filled and on the rank order of the saints he serves.

The alfereces, or captains of the fiestas, provide a ceremonial link be-

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[2] Julio de la Fuente (1964:30) has summarized the effect of literacy in breaking the [555]
homogeneity of the community since the literate Indians have received greater privileges and [212]
release from communal work. When the entire community is educated, the monopoly of
literacy is broken.

undertaking the burden of office is still phrased as a means of maintaining 621
the internal system of security. Tying the new official to personal support- 794
ers in the household setting is a significant means of integrating the Span- 527
ish governmental system with the preexisting authority systems.

The emphasis on continuity is evident in the prescribed pattern of be- 621
havior stressing repetition of bodily and verbal performances. Repetition 794
of behavior, the essence of all ritual, provides that fulfillment of expecta- 527
tions which links the present with the past.[5] The nakawanehetik, who are 177
the repositories of knowledge of the customs of the ancestors, are stage di- 178
rectors of acts performed in the house. Behavioral replication is reinforced by verbal references in the pat?o?tan to performing "that which our mothers, that which our fathers did." When any act has lost the wider context of belief in which it must at one time have been embedded, the reason given for the performance is simply "so was the custom of our ancestors." As an example of this, the officials in the president's house on the day of the inauguration stand and bow in the direction of the rising sun. A few informants have heard of the God of the East, Santo Ariyó, the saint in charge of household gods who gave to the people corn, wheat, beans, and cattle, and they say that it is in recognition of him that people turn to the East and bow their heads in all household performances. They further state that in this act they defend the house against the entry of the devil. But the mythological context which might explain the logic of this association is lost. These behavioral sherds, when cut off from the belief system which they dramatized, survive in perpetuating the customs of the ancestors.

The link with the past is also seen in the presence of both new and old 621
officials in the town hall, providing a setting in which the succession of the 794
new officials is acknowledged by the old. The role of the principales is of 527
the greatest importance in establishing continuity, significantly empha- 178
sized in the fact that it is they who hand over the symbol of authority, the

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[5] Bunzel (1952:251) has pointed to this familiarity of ritual sets in a variety of ceremonials as providing ties with the past in the inauguration in Chichicastenango, and Vogt [171]
(1966) has shown the significance of replication in the ceremonials of Zinacantan. Another function served by behavorial replication is that which Leach (1967:2) pointed out for verbal replication in myths and prayers: it overcomes the "static" of less significant background interference.

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794 newly cut pine canes of the police and the old carved and painted staffs of
527 the higher officials.

178 Order and measure, respect and deference are the social effect achieved
621 in the ritual performance of the inaugurations. In the act of drinking,
794 these principles become behaviorally explicit. The drink is carefully measured
527 out and passed to the first principal, who asks permission to drink it
273 of each set of officials in order of their ranked positions in the hierarchy.
Each official must receive the drink, whether he is a teetotaler or not. He
will then perform the action of drinking, which is sufficient to express his
good will as part of the group. The symbolic act of pretending to drink—
receiving the "gift" and raising it to one's lips without imbibing—reveals
the importance of acts *as such* in social interaction. This is expressed in the
[192] Tzeltal loan term *ʔak̨sion,* from the Spanish *acción,* the pretended act,
which demonstrates in this case one's good will in joining in the communal
act. We have a tendency in our culture to downgrade the act, stressing
motive specific to the immediate goal of the act. If performance is motivated
by other goals, we express it in phrases such as "He is only acting,"
or "It was all a big act." In Tzoʔontahal, the play is the thing, and everything
can be justified by reference to traditional expectations.

621 Before describing some of the organizational changes which are affecting
794 the civil-religious hierarchy, I shall at this point assess its viability on
561 the basis of structural criteria. These criteria include the effectiveness of
177 the system in (1) coordinating roles such that conflict is minimized in carrying
178 out tasks, (2) motivating people to enter into office and fulfill obligations,
(3) absorbing changes without structural modification.

The primary devices for coordinating roles in the hierarchy are those of relative age and residence in the dual division. The major challenge to the age-respect pattern has been the introduction of young leadership in the roles of president and síndico. This shock to the system has been somewhat overcome by the retention of the ceremonial primacy of the principales. The president and síndico are considered outside the traditional hierarchy. This conceptual isolation of the roles becomes obvious when one asks informants to list the civil officials, for they never include the president and síndico in the first response. They are mentioned in response to repeated enquiries as to whether there are other officials.

The principle of balancing posts according to residence in the dual divi- 621
sion is maintained in the traditional civil posts but fails to be effective 794
again in the case of the president. Increasing population in the upper divi- 561
sion meant that the expensive post of alférez had to be filled primarily 177
from the side with the highest population. This unbalancing of the shar- 178
ing of these burdensome posts eventually led to revolt and the post was
abolished. Since it was the key post in learning prayers, its loss may mean
the end of the traditional rituals in the home.

The hierarchy fails to provide sufficient prestige or power to motivate 794
people voluntarily to undertake some posts. The most vulnerable post was 554
that of alférez. In fulfilling obligations to the saints, alfereces used to 434
spend over 3,000 pesos, twice the normal income of a man in one year. 796
They were assisted by members of their immediate households either in 754
loans or in the sale of pottery to help pay for the house fiestas. The show 178
of wealth at these fiestas, when up to one hundred guests were fed, excited [556]
the envy of neighbors, often among the invited guests. It was felt that this provoked witchcraft, and every former alférez I knew maintained that he suffered some catastrophe following his year in office. In the last few years before its demise in 1966 the post was accepted only under duress, and all those who had been nominated at first chose to go to jail. The reason that it survived as long as it did was the insistence of those officials who served in this post that it was essentail to maintaining good fiestas. The resolution of the contradictions by abolishing the post contrast with that of Zinacantan, where men sought the prestige-conferring posts that involved large expenditures of money as a validation of wealth (Cancian 1965).

Another contradition which minimizes the motivation to undertake the 621
traditional posts is that the highest post in the ladder, that of principal, is 554
one associated with embarrassment and shame rather than prestige. Shorn 178
of his roles in decision-making and in guarding public funds, the principal
is reduced to holding the plate in which donations for the major fiestas are
placed. The ceremonial role of the principales will probably survive, how- [273]
ever, since the old men of the community who have retired from active
work in the fields enjoy the drinking sessions in the cabildo sufficiently to
compensate for the shame associated with the role.

The internal structural contradictions have to be considered in the con-

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text of strong sentiments supporting an independent civil authority. The adaptations which have been made within the existing structure are a tribute to the strength of the sentiments associating survival of tradition with office-holding in the civil-religious hierarchy. Chapter 9 will deal with the capacity of the structure to absorb change.

Chapter 8

Taking Care of the Lord Spirits

Religious behavior is concerned with two major goals: maintaining a 771
given state of prosperity and protecting the community against disaster. In [776]
the words of one informant: "All of the goods which we enjoy—the corn,
beans, and wheat that we eat, the animals which work for us and give us
food—are the gifts of the Lord spirits." The technique for maintaining the [196]
flow of goods of the world is the annual cycle of fiestas for the saints. The [776]
strategy for protecting the community against disaster is through avoid- [782]
ance of offense and special offerings to the gods identified with pre-his- [178]
panic deities and spirits. Responsibility for the ceremonial cycle is assigned [794]
to officials who represent the community, but everyone is responsible for [784]
the avoidance of disaster, since any transgression of moral behavior by an
individual can cause their wrath and bring destruction of crops and animals. The protective rituals involve beliefs continuous from pre-hispanic times; maintenance depends on Catholic saints.

KINDS OF LORD SPIRITS

Religious behavior is based on an understanding of the personality and 776
rank of each deity in a hierarchy of power. The people distinguish two
major categories of gods: the lord spirits of the heaven, *č'ultatik̦ ta
č'ulčan*, and the lord spirits of the church, *č'ultatik̦ ta č'ulna*. The prefix [193]
č'ul in all of these terms can be translated as spirit. All growing things—
people, plants, and animals—have a spirit. *Tatik̦* can be translated as our [192]
lords, elders, or fathers. The categories of spirits discussed here differ from [193]
the č'uleletik (Chapter 1) since these are spirits possessed by the place in which they dwell, as indicated by the possessive form of the noun with the prefix *s*.

the sun to kill people. She is afraid that if all the people die, other people will come who have just one hand and one foot. They will not be able to work. Our Grandmother the Moon wants things as they are. So she fights the Sun, and then there is an eclipse. For this reason, people say that she bears our sins.

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[821]

The tales occasionally try to bring the old gods into focus with the Christian gods and to explain certain cosmological events, for example the eclipse and the movement in the heavens of the sun and the moon. The synthesis is incomplete. First of all, the small part Jesus (Second Brother) plays in the first myth, in which he finally disappears into the forest, shows a failure to fit the three gods into the pre-hispanic format which included only two main characters. Secondly, the myths fail to synthesize the codes of morality stemming from Maya and Christian sources. In Christian mythology, the deities are conceived of as perfect. They are not identified with the sun, but are the power of creation which brought forth the sun and made it move. Destructive forces come from the evil power of the Devil. The deities of the Indians incorporate both good and evil. Cosmological forces are the gods acting directly either to promote or destroy man's work. Even the Grandmother Moon, who shows compassion for her grandchildren, can be piqued into destroying their crops.

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In another tale the personification of good and evil in separate characters shows greater influence from Catholicism. Jesus emerges as the hero who, with the collaboration of the Virgin Mary, outwits the Devil.

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After Jesus was crucified, the King of the Jews[3] *called upon people to sow a staff to prove who moves the world. Jesus planted the seed, but the Jews did not let them grow. He did it again, and only one leg came out and one hand came out. Therefore the plant did not stand because the "King of Evil" was watching.*

Jesus and his mother had an idea. He spoke to her, saying, "What do you think, Mother?" She replied, "The only thing I can say is, what can we think of?"

The Lord Christ replied, "Our children and offspring [the milpa] do

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[3] The Devil is alternately called King of the Jews [Statal Jurio], King of Evil [Statal Pukuh], and the Devil in the story. [192]

I do not know if it is so. I just heard that in a story told." He then re- 821
ferred back to the story of K'oš, the younger brother who took over the 776
task of carrying the sun from his elder brother, to explain how the sun's movement started.

Misfortunes caused by lightning, winds, and drought are explained as failures in social relations among people of the community or between the members of the community and the spirits. Restraint in their own conduct, fulfillment of their ceremonial obligations, and show of respect to the spirits are the only safeguards against such casualties.

CARING FOR THE LORD SPIRITS OF THE CHURCH

The relationships established with the spirits of the church contrast to 776
those with the spirits of the heaven in the following ways: First, the up- 794
keep and maintenance of the spirits of the church is delegated to appointed 796
representatives, the mayordomos, who carry the burden for the commun- 821
ity; "all the people of the world," on the other hand, are responsible 177
at all times for avoiding behavior which would incur the wrath of the sun and moon. Second, the obligations to the spirits of the church are standardized, while those to the spirits of heaven are ill-defined and involve avoidance of offense rather than positive expectations. Third, duties toward the church spirits are performed in repetitive events following the calendrical cycle of fiestas, while obligations to the spirits of the heaven are fulfilled sporadically, as during an eclipse of the moon or a drought.

The major strategy in dealing with the spirits of the church is to give 776
them a fiesta. Big fiestas are associated with the big four saints. These 794
fiestas have been the responsibility of the top mayordomos, called 796
kobraria, and until 1966, of the alfereces. Big fiestas also occur on the 177
Day of the Dead, the Day of Santiago, the Day of San Pedro and San Pablo, the Day of the Kings, and during Easter Week. The pattern of fiestas will be described first, followed by a detailed description of the inauguration of the alfereces, witnessed in 1965 before the institution was abolished the following year, and the fiestas of Santiago and Easter Week.

Religious fiestas occur in an annual cycle of ceremonies based on the 796
Catholic calendar. In Tzoˀontahal the Maya calendar no longer exists, [805]
even in the twenty-day cycle that constituted a month found in the neigh- [178]
boring towns of Oxchuk, Larraínzar, and Chenalhó. [171]

796 body was washed. The confusion may come not from error, but from an
539 identification of the patron saints with Jesus. The importance of the story
273 is that liquor, as the gift of the gods, is the medium for releasing people
from their fears.

796 The small fiestas are the responsibility of only the two mayordomos, the
794 elder and the junior, who are assigned to the saint. They ring the church bells, light the candles, and play the drum and flute until noon. In the large fiestas all the mayordomos are active, as well as the fiscal and the priest, the prayer-reciters, and formerly the alfereces. The entire pueblo participates in the mass given at the large fiestas and assembles to "see the saints" when they emerge in the procession.

The proceedings of the fiesta take place in the church and the church yard, the house of the cofrade of the major saint whose fiesta it is, the plaza, and formerly, the house of the alférez of that saint. In each of these domains different sets of actors are tied together by acts performed in carrying out responsibilities to the saints. The chain of command is established in each setting: in the church the mayordomos are directed by the fiscal; in the household the eldest nakawane orders the b'alnial and re-
[562] ceives the visitors with the patʔoʔtan. He is the master of ceremonies, as in all household gatherings, and his female counterpart is the woman speaker. She orders the women helpers in the preparation of the food, which is then served by the b'alnialetik. Religious officials hold ceremonies in their houses only after they have served five times in office.

796 In the household, religious ceremonies replicate civil ceremonies. A mouthwash is served, followed by coffee and bean tamales, another round of mouthwash, an offering of thanks for the liquor by the nakawane, and
[534] a serving of liquor. Musical instruments played in the household differ from those of the church yard: a guitar and gourd rattle provide the accompaniment to the drinking episode here. Fiestas held in the household of the alfereces were terminated with a dance.

Choosing and Installing the Alférez

794 Formerly the alfereces were the chief figures in maintaining the fiesta
178 cycle. During my stay in 1964 and 1965 the officials were experiencing

794 178 more and more resistance from those named to undertake the post. Finally, in 1966 the officials were able to recruit only from the growing division of Ahk'olnantik. There had always been two representatives from each side in the past, and the role was a symbol of the division and of its [621] unity in ceremonial occasions. I predicted at that time that the institution would not survive because the imbalance in representation destroyed the structural premises of the role. When I returned for a brief visit in 1967 I was told that indeed 1966 was the last year the alfereces were inaugurated and that the institution had died. I would expect this to further weaken the structural opposition of the dual division. This case of structural breakdown is a good example of the behavioral feedback one can analyze with an equilibrium model of change. The following description of the fiesta is based on an inauguration I witnessed in 1965. 794 796

Formerly, the role of alférez involved both civil and religious functions. At the time that I observed the institution in action, it provided the ceremonial link between the civil and the religious hierarchies, but the duties of the alfereces were only ceremonial. In the words of one informant, their function was "to put on a good fiesta, to drink, and to dance, and to bear the sacred banners in processions."

The alférez was chosen by the four judges and the four regidores with the help of the president and the síndico. About two months before the installation of a new alférez, which occurred during the fiesta for the one of the four saints with which he was associated, the civil officers sent out the first policeman and the martomorey, or elder policeman, to bring in the appointed alférez. The martomorey greeted the alférez with the patʔoʔtan, and the appointment was made known. The standard response of the chosen alférez was, "I don't want it. I have no money. I cannot bear it [the post]." The martomorey and first policeman said, "Good, we shall return another day." On their return, if the nominee still refused to accept the post, they brought him to the jail, where they left him for two or three days before bringing him before the civil officials. There they "took his heart" to see if he would accept. A fairly standardized conversation ensued:

Nominee: "I do not want it; I cannot bear it."

794 *the regidores were seated in their customary places; the alfereces sat on the*
796 *visitors' bench. The two former alfereces went before the two newly appointed*
526 *alfereces and gave an account of what was going to take place, instructing*
them on "how they should make a fiesta."

When the two former alfereces entered, they went to the president, saying, "How does the Lord see you alive on this holy afternoon?" They then went to the síndico and the regidores and ended with the judges, exchanging a patʔoʔtan.

The alfereces went out, mounted their horses, and were handed the banners
by the regidores. The two old alfereces received their banners first.
All four made the sign of the cross, first facing the cabildo, then the
[788] *church, and then rode in procession, preceded by the flutist, two drum*
players, and a guitarist, and followed by the other horsemen. They
stopped before the church, dipping their flags, first toward the church and
then the cabildo. The president, síndico, and first judge walked across the
[533] *plaza to the church as the church bells were rung, and all the musical instruments*
played—the marimba, bell, drums, and flute. The alfereces dismounted
and put their banners in the church.

[426] *The final day, called* Lahinbahel Sk'in, *was spent sobering up, putting things back in order, and returning borrowed items.*

178 Although Santiago is not one of the major saints, a major celebration is
231 given in his honor because of the high value placed on horsemanship in
526 this community. Before the construction of the Pan-American Highway in
[796] 1953 everyone in town had horses which were used to carry the pottery to
[492] market. Riding skills were developed in the free-swinging *macho* (manly)
style of northern Mexico's cowboys. Even today when horses are not as
economically useful the horse culture has survived. The running of the
horses in the fiesta is not competitive. Each rider does his best to tear at
high speed across the plaza, but there is no specific goal. Since the
[273] drunken riders often fall and are injured, some of the excitement is based
on the potential danger.

128 The behavioral data on which the analysis of rituals depends are included because they provide a basis for comparison with neighboring

796 is served when the expectations are that the individual will feel embarrassment.
154 These occasions formerly occurred when the company arrived at the
[273] house of the alférez before the dance and when the alfereces mounted
their horses. Cigarettes signal relaxation, and when the first round of cigarettes
[276] is served in the house setting, the company abandons formal restraints
[522] and, led by the chief nakawane, indulges in joking.

541 *Carnival and Easter Week.* Carnival has changed over time more
522 than any other religious ceremonial in the town. Until five years ago, a
177 group of masked jokers visited the houses of the captains of the fiestas.
• 178 They wore Ladino clothing, including vest, pants, and shoes, and they hid their faces behind masks or painted them black. They danced a "Ladino dance" (paired couples), first in the church and then in the houses of the alfereces. While dancing, they made sexual allusions about unmarried women. Their joking emphasized their strangeness to the villagers; for example one of the jokers might say, "You do not know what type of person I am. An airplane made me." They carried small stuffed animals which they made "cry." Pretending they were the husband of a woman, they would go to her and tell her to take care of her "baby." The woman speaker would sometimes respond to their jokes, saying, "Who are you? You are not good looking, you little black boy. You must be from Germany or from the other side of the water. Maybe you are from Patwitz or Yetawitz, and your father is kurik." People say the custom was discontinued because it was too expensive to give liquor to the jokers.

541 Another carnival custom which has been lost is the "common meal" of
262 squash on the five Fridays of Lent. Formerly the wives of the four kobra-
794 ria brought squash from hot country, cooked it, and brought two gourds
177 each to the church. The assistant divided it, giving two pieces to each of
178 the mayordomos. This custom was stopped during the typhoid epidemic
[731] of 1928 and has never been resumed because, it is said, the people did not
want to lose work time. These changes may be a response to the priest's attempts to modify some of the excesses of carnival. Whether or not this is so, the people prefer to attribute change to their own decisions.

796 The events of Easter Week as recounted by an informant are outlined below.

Chapter 9

The Competition for Power

829 Changes in the organization of the civil and religious hierarchies since the
178 constitution of 1927 can be traced in a series of events remembered by
177 members of the community. Their selection of significant events and the
interpretation they make of them give the best clues to their response to change. In the remembrance of things past people structure their world and project expectations for the future. Behavior in these events lacks the controls operating in the formal rituals of the officials—age-graded authority, hierarchy, and a code of behavior which conceals the open show of power. The strategies employed in these organizational changes reveal other rules or transformation of the old rules characterizing social interaction.

554 The structure of roles in the civil and religious hierarchies has remained
621 intact. What has changed are the bases for according prestige and author-
794 ity and allocating roles. The pivotal positions in which change is occurring
578 are the mediating roles between local and national power structures, spe-
177 cifically those of president and secretary in the civil authority and of fiscal
178 and priest in the religious authority.

The contest for power and "control of the town" has centered in five
[212] blocks of competition: (1) the opposition of new young leaders with skills
[191] in speaking Spanish, literacy, and knowledge of the idiom of behavior in
[756] the national culture to the established succession of an age-dominated authority system; (2) the challenge by the civil authority to the control of the curers who rely on power derived from possession of an animal spirit; (3) the struggle for political power among factions based on new economic enterprises; (4) the contest among local caciques for domination; and (5) the conflict among religious functionaries. The series of events in which these contests have crystallized and brought about a reorganization

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of political relations is summarized for each of these conflict areas. Most of 578
the events recorded below are transcriptions of informants' statements 177
given in Tzeltal. I have chosen this method to show how the people interpret 178
incidents and how this leads to cognitive restructuring. [128]

The Conflict among Civil Officials

In the period of consolidation since the revolution, the crucial issue in 621
determining the allocation of power among local civil authorities has been 555
that of incorporating men who have special abilities to deal with external 212
authority without upsetting an age-ranked system. Prior to the 1950s these 177
skills were rare—in 1920 only four young men could sign their names and 178
read. The civil careers of two men, Ceferino, a native of the town, and
Augustín, a revistido Indian from Huistán, illustrate the different courses
taken by this new leadership in the post-revolutionary period of the 1930s.
Ceferino was included in the given structure of power while Augustín
used his skills in dealing with Ladinos to gain personal power. Ceferino
was one of the first four men of the town to learn to read and write. The 159
civil authorities recognized his potential usefulness in the town hall, and 212
succeeded in incorporating him in an honorific but powerless position as 621
scribe. He described his introduction into local government:

> *After I got out of school, the town saw that I knew how to write. Formerly there was no one who knew how to write. In the town hall the judges and president needed someone to write down the contributions and the payment for the government agents. Therefore, when the civil authority changed in the new year, they talked to my mother. As was the custom* [624]
> *then, four regidores came to "raise" me, bringing a bottle of trago as a gift* [273]
> *for my mother. She did not drink it alone. Together with the regidores we finished the trago. After finishing the trago, the first regidor began to speak to my mother in the pat?o?tan, saying, "I am going to bring one of your children, one of your offspring to the place where we look and where we see [reference to town hall]. We ask this favor because he knows how to write. Therefore the judges and the president ordered me to come and raise him and take out his soil, his mud, for this duty for this obligation.*

witz had formed a small *cacicazgo* (supporters of a cacique) of armed 621
men. Because of their influence with departmental officials since the land 609
grant, they had secured an order to reassign lots in the center, putting one 578
family from Yetawitz in each block. The reaction of the townspeople to this "invasion" of barrio Indians was immediate and conclusive, as Ceferino's account reveals:

> *The owners of the house lots here objected to having their lots seized. They went to a lawyer in San Cristóbal, and they also had the help of the professor here. He was a good professor. We walked with the professor. The pueblo was united. We did not have fear. We were in accord with the principles. The people from Yetawitz went to another lawyer in San Cristóbal. They got an order that the people of the pueblo would have to admit the people of Yetawitz. We returned to the lawyer. He asked where these people were from. We said they were from Huistán. They were well armed. Because of this, we went to take over their arms.*
>
> *When we arrived at their house, Juan asked, "What are you here for?"*
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> *We answered, "We came to get your rifles."*
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> *They refused to give them up, but we seized their property. We tied up the men and carried them up to the pueblo. We dragged them like dogs up to the jail and put them in.*
>
> *They asked, "Why are you putting us in jail?" and we answered, "Tomorrow we will arrange the case."*
>
> *Four police stayed there. The next morning I came to see them. They had planned to go to Las Casas, but we ordered the saddles taken off the horses that were in readiness. We tried them, and they no longer bothered the pueblo.*

The Huistecan's attempt to seize power reveals several significant fac- 621
tors in the genesis of cummunity political institutions. In the 1930s in 423
Chiapas, the land reform act of 1927 was taking effect. Translation of law 178
into reality in the local community required the drive and leadership of 177
the Indians themselves. Literacy and Spanish-speaking skills were of even [212]
greater importance than before. The Indians of the center who had not [191]
been forced to work in the fincas and who had sufficient resources to resist contact with the outside economy were not in a position to take a leader-

621 ship role in the new political setting. As a result, it was the marginal Indians,
423 outsiders who had come as did Augustín to work as *baldios* (laborers)
• 178 on the finca near the town, that were the drivng force behind the demand
177 for land. This was the basis for the new leadership in the early days
[609] of land reform. The ejido program, conceived of by Cárdenas as a basis
for political development of the campesinos, (Brandenburg 1964) gave
these marginal Indians the opportunity to rise to positions of influence in
local government. The reluctance of the townspeople to take action
[754] against Augustín derived in part from fear, since he reputedly backed his
use of force with witchcraft—the imported kind of witchcraft in which
poisons are used instead of spiritual force.

622 Ceferino, the man who finally deposed Augustín, was a member of the
554 traditional community, but because he had been impoverished by burying
177 four members of his family in the typhoid epidemic of 1928, he had been
178 forced to work in the fincas. There he had learned Spanish and some of
the ways of the dominant society. His leadership potential had developed
[191] in the role of *caporal*, or gang leader of the pickers in the coffee finca, and
[464] he had been a leader in the trek of recruited laborers down to the fincas in
Soconusco. Under the old authority structure, in which all officials including
the president were recruited through the hierarchy, he would never
have reached a prestigious position. But in this crisis, he was the only man
willing to confront the incumbent and take over the operation of civil affairs.

622 Ceferino did not take advantage of the situation to emerge as a cacique
554 himself. As he explained in his narrative, "The pueblo was united. We
did not have fear. We were in accord with the principles." The way in
which he had been introduced into the cabildo as scribe had successfully
neutralized his own ambitions to attain power, if he had any. He accepted
the ideal of a united pueblo, recognizing the authority of the principales.

621 The increasing scope and frequency of relationships between the nation
177 and the locality since the revolution has emphasized the roles of president
178 and síndico at the expense of the authority and control exercised by the
principales. The ceremonial significance of the principales in rituals is retained
as a symbol of continuity in the change of officials, but their func-

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tions have decreased. Their major responsibility is to hold the plate in which the contributions for the fiestas are deposited by the police. Formerly, the fact that the principales also held the money until it was spent lent dignity and prestige to this function. Now that the money is turned over to the treasurer, who also keeps the accounts, passing the plate gives them a sense of shame. When I asked why the principales lost authority, the first response was cast in terms of behavior: my informant, a former president, pointed out that it was because they did not attend the town hall every day. When I asked why they did not appear, the reply was reformulated in functional terms: they did not come because the laws and acts that are raised and interpreted in the town hall are written in Spanish, and the principales could not read or write. As a consequence, the balance of power has shifted to the posts of president and síndico, while the framework in which the officials act has remained.

CHALLENGE BY THE CIVIL OFFICIALS OF THE POWER OF THE CURERS

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The autonomy of the highland Indian corporate community has rested on the retention of social control by local leaders. This local leadership, which has survived over four hundred years of domination by Spanish colonial and national rule, is based on power derived from two sources: (1) control over life and death by men who claim to possess an animal spirit and/or (2) ability to devine or predict the future, such as the calendar priests have (Nuñez de la Vega 1702:19).[1] The belief in power derived 000

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[754]
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[1] Bishop Nuñez de la Vega repeatedly inveighs against the "maestros Nahualistas." This is summarized in an excerpt, which I have translated, from his book (1702:19):

> Almost two hundred years after the light of evangelism dawned, the Indians in most of the Kingdom of New Spain and Guatemala are found full of their primitive errors, superstitions, and misdeeds such that there is hardly a single pueblo where each year there are not deaths brought about by witches, and houses and families known to have, as an inheritance acquired from father to son, evil powers so abominable that they are viewed with great fear by the rest of the Indians. With only a glance and certain words, with which they invoke the Devil, they can end life or cause their victim to go mad with great pains and stupendous illnesses, and the result is that they inflict their rivals for very slight pretexts. We exile them and other spiritual performers from the church, and when the ministers and judges try to verify what happened to the sick ones, all

776 The belief in power derived
174 from animal spirits was probably influenced by the Toltec belief in nahualism,
or transformation of people after death into animals (Calnek
1962:22). The Toltec belief originated in the period of Mexican influence
but had many local indigenous manifestations (Foster 1944). The integration
793 of the two systems of power was brought about by calendar priests
787 controlling the distribution of animal spirits (Calnek 1962:19). The degree
754 of retention of calendrical knowledge and of belief in witchcraft gives us
177 one of the best indices of acculturation in the area.[2] In Tzoʔontahal there
178 is no remnant of calendar divination for ceremonial or predictive use.
776 However, witchcraft based on belief in animal spirits continues to be an
important factor in the contest for power. The technique of secrecy, of presenting
[621] a united front in the face of attempts by the outside Ladinos to
[609] tamper with the local social control system, persists to this day in the
town.

621 An endemic problem in communities dominated by belief in witchcraft
626 is control over the evil power of witches. The traditional control system in
754 Tzoʔontahal operated through the guardianship of three sets of powerholders
769 who checked up on each other: the ancestors, the curers, and the
756 judges. The guardianship of the ancestors consisted in preventing any
177 child possessed of a swayohel from the devil from growing up to abuse his
178 power and in keeping any evil spirits from entering the town. The curers,

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[754] the Indians, whether out of cowardice or deceit, withdraw their accusation or claims,
so that it is impossible to convict the evildoers for punishment; and for lack of sufficient
[171] proof they cannot be punished, or if there is enough basis to put them in prison, they
sometimes disappear and flee to another jurisdiction and hide, denying their place of
origin or changing their name.

[2] In Oxchuk, calendar experts with the ability to divine the future still set the days for carrying out Catholic fiestas according to the twenty-day Maya ceremonial cycle. Each of the spirits symbolizing the twenty days wielded the power of good or evil. This provided the basis for predicting. When Villa Rojas studied the town in the 1940s, elders of patrilineal lineages controlled the behavior of members by causing sickness brought by their *lab*, or animal spirit (Villa Rojas 1947). In San Pedro Chenalhó, the principales exercise power through their *wayhel*, or animal spirit (Guiteras Holmes 1961). Nahuales of leaders of the patrilineages and principales are feared and respected in Larraínzar, although there is a growing discontent with their oppressive control (Holland 1963). Men believed to have thirteen nahuales figure as guardians and avengers for individuals in Pinola society, although the Indians of this community no longer have a hierarchy of civil offices through which their prestige can be publicly validated (Hermitte 1964).

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as the direct agents of the ancestors, guarded the streets of their own side 754
of the dual division. The judges, with the supervision of the principales, 769
were responsible for guarding against the abuse of power by the curers or 756
others possessing a swayohel in their review of witchcraft cases in the 177
town hall. The three sets of functionaries—ancestors, curers, and judges— 178
are classified in a lexicon of role function in the stem *meʔ . . tat . .*, common to the terms applied to them, meʔtiktatik, meʔiltatil, and meʔeštateš.[3]

The system of control over the use of power has been in a state of uneasy tension. In a series of incidents recounted below, the growing suspicion that the judges and the principales were not countering the witches because of their fear of falling victim to them, and that the curers themselves were exercising the witchcraft becomes apparent.

In the following case, the system of checks and balances was upset by the entry into the presidency in 1940 of Mam Nicolás, the leading curer of Allannantik. Nicolás combined the skills of operating in the traditional culture with those of dealing with the Ladino world. Despite the fact that he was a graduate of the boarding school operating in the town in the 1930s, which had far more extensive effects in acculturation as well as formal education than any prior school, he practiced curing. The case is recounted by Ceferino, the scribe:

> *Formerly the dead president Mam Nicolás left at midday from the* 159
> *town hall and went to his house where he ate a meal. A neighbor, Fran-* 621
> *cisco, came to talk to him. They drank a half a liter of trago, and then* 754
> *began to drink a second and got drunk. They began to say goodbye, and* 682
> *Francisco left Nicolás' house. When Nicolás saw that Francisco went out, he grabbed his shotgun. He saw that Francisco was now far away, and he fired many shots. One got him right in his back. When Francisco felt it, he shouted. The police heard him and went to get the judges who* [692]
> *came to see also. His [Francisco's] wife came. She raised his head and cried when she saw he was dead. An elder sister brought a new mat to* carry him.

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[3] The suffixes *-el*, and *-tik* refer to pronominal forms, as in "you judges" and "our ancestors." *-il* is an article, as in "the curers." In prayer, the ancestors may be addressed in the second person, or the judges may be referred to with the first-person-plural possessive, but these forms are rare in those contexts. [193]

621
756 tural opposition between the two sides of the dual division. In this case,
578 resolution came with the intercession of federal troops.

[648] When curing was a controlled profession, with a hierarchy legitimizing
756 entry and exit, the power of the curers was directed toward guarding the
178 village against evil as well as curing. In the 1940s, the loss of one leader by
death and the other's jail sentence meant loss of control over entry into
the profession. A growing suspicion and discontent with the curers as a
[754] group, laying upon them the responsibility of much of the witchcraft, is
reflected in the account of another older informant:

> *Formerly when the curers J. C., A. A., S. K., and J. D. were alive, they walḳed in common. The people were in accord with the curers because they watched over the peublo. They ḳnew about medicine, and so people of Alannantiḳ went to asḳ them favors to cure them and also the people of Ahḳ'olnantiḳ went to asḳ them favors.*
>
> *But then, after they died* [*about 1940*], *the principales did not dare fight the curers because they had animal spirits, and the principales themselves didn't—they were just honorable people.*

621 The doubt about the civil authority's control over the curers has in-
756 creased since young leaders have taken the leadership in the town. One in-
178 formant said, "When there are young people in the cabildo, they can't
keep control of the curers, but the old people in the cabildo can." With the
relaxation of restrictions on entry into the curing profession, following the
loss of leadership and the ranked hierarchy, curers were no longer re-
[273] strained by professional standards. When drunk, they bragged of their
[754] power to do evil as well as to do good. The first killing of a curer accused
683 of being a witch occurred in 1937. He was working in Pinola when he
621 was shot. The dead curer's widow wanted to bring his body back to be
[178] buried in the town cemetery, but the request was refused by the judges.
This suggests that the town authorities agreed with the accusation, since it
is the custom to return the dead to the town for burial. Other assassinations by individuals occurred in 1943 and in 1950. During this period, the civil officials sanctioned the assassinations of persons accused and convicted of witchcraft. When someone wished to kill a man suspected of witchcraft, they would go to the town hall and ask for permission. After a re-

756 *When he arrived here, he did not hear any word that they would kill*
627 *him. He persisted in his custom of stealing. And the pueblo seized him and put him in prison. The whole town seized him although he had heard no word.*

They tied him to a tree and said to him, "You do not have shame. You are a curer, father of the pueblo, [respect term for curer], and yet you behaved badly and truly stole. The town sees you are a bad man, Emilio. They call you their father, but now I am going to tell you that you ought not to be called father. You're a bad one."

He wanted to be called father, but he was only a bad one. He returned again to San Cristóbal because of two crimes. He did not hear the words. He remained in prison, and when he came out someone else came and killed him.

756 Since 1938, nine of the thirty-seven homicide cases on which I collected
682 data (Table 29) were killings of curers. The increasing frequency of such
178 killings reveals the loss of faith in the guardianship role of the curers, but along with this, retention of belief in their power to work evil.

In the series of successful confrontations, the civil authority has gained
731 strength and overcome some of the fear of the people. In May 1964, during
756 a severe contagion of measles, a rumor started that the disease was being
754 spread because of witchcraft. The president called together the curers. The
627 consensus of this gathering was that a certain curer of Alannantik had
621 buried the "heat" which was causing the deaths in the milpa of his enemy. The people of Alannantik gathered with the curers and the civil officials in the milpa of the "enemy" to dig it out. The curers dug out a charcoal brazier which is the sign of illness and threw it in the Cave of the Star.
[683] That evening the suspected witch was killed, presumably by his neighbors.

In the most recent confrontation between the civil authorities and an in-
756 dividual curer, in March 1966, the civil authorities showed a united front
621 in denouncing the use of witchcraft to threaten any official. The entire
627 group of practicing curers from both sides of the dual division were called
754 to witness the denunciation before the assembled civil officials in the town hall. The only one absent was the curer accused of attempting to cut short the life of the president because of envy of his position. The assembled

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 248]

Table 29. Time, Victim, Suspects, Crime, and Outcome in Selected Homicide Cases, 1938–1965

	Victim				
	Curer or other	*Age*	*Killer*	*Suspected crime of victim*	*Outcome*
1938 *	Other	50	Unknown	Witchcraft	No one apprehended
1945	Other	65	Drinking companions	Drunken quarrel	Two companions went to jail
1946	Curer	48	Brothers: 1 elder, 2 younger	Witchcraft	One brother went to jail for five years
1946 *	Other	38	Unknown	Witchcraft	No one complained to authorities
1946	Curer	45	Unknown	Witchcraft	No punishment; no suspect apprehended
1946	Curer	50	Unknown	Witchcraft	Wife of victim complained, but no witness would testify
1958	Curer	27	Father of boy who had died of witchcraft	Witchcraft	Before dying, dead man revealed name of killer. Wife reported it to authorities, but no action taken
1960 *	Other	60	Son-in-law	Witchcraft	Son-in-law fled town
1960	Other	24	Cattle owners' paid killer	Stole cattle	Released killer on bail
1960	Curer	60	Brother-in-law	Witchcraft	No one apprehended
1961	Curer	70	Neighbors	Witchcraft	Neighbors, who felt he was responsible for contagion, were not apprehended
1961 *	Other	30	Wife's brother	Very abusive, fought when drunk	Suspect fled town

(*cont.*)

[P.245]
7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970
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	Victim				
	Curer or other	*Age*	*Killer*	*Suspected crime of victim*	*Outcome*
1961 *	Other	45	Neighbors	Witchcraft	No one apprehended
1961 *	Other	37	Unknown	Witchcraft	No one apprehended; wife agreed he was a witch
1962	Other	18	Rival for girl	Fought over girl	No one accused
1962	Other	20	Cattle owners' paid killer	Stole cattle	Went to jail but released on bail
1962	Other	35	Brother-in-law	Revenge for death of brother; political conflict	Killer declared he had killed, paid fine and was released
1962 *	Other	20	Rival for girl	Fought over girl	No one accused
1962 *	Other	50	Leader of cattle association	Stole cattle	Unknown
1963 *	Curer	36	Unknown	Witchcraft	No one apprehended, but victim's brother tried to find killer
1963	Curer	45	Indian of neighboring town whom victim had accused of witchcraft	False accusation	No action taken
1963 *	Other	Unknown	Drinking companions	Barroom brawl	One of assailants went to jail, and other two bailed out
1963	Other	70	Sons of a man whom he was accused of having killed	Witchcraft	No action taken
1964 *	Other	30	Killer paid by victim's brothers	Stole cattle	Brother fled town but jailed when he returned
1964 *	Other	34	Unknown	Witchcraft	No one accused
1964	Other	30	Ladino liquor distiller of another town	Denounced distiller to authorities	No action taken

[P.247]

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	Victim Curer or other	Age	Killer	Suspected crime of victim	Outcome
1964	Other	30	Brothers	Witchcraft	One brother fled; other put in jail but he claimed first brother did it
1964	Curer	65	Neighbors	Witchcraft in contagion	No action taken
1964	Other	22	Close friend of victim, hired by cattle owners	Stole cattle	Killer freed on bail
1965	Other	45	Unknown	Witchcraft	No one accused
1965 *	Other	45	Unknown	Witchcraft	No one apprehended
1965	Other	42	Unknown	Unknown	No one accused
1965	Other	27	Brother-in-law	Had relations with 14-year-old sister-in-law	Brother-in-law tried but not sufficient evidence
1965 *	Other	35	Unknown	Stole cattle and corn	No action taken
1965	Other	42	Son by first marriage	Failed to provide dowery; also witchcraft	Widow spread rumors against step-son, but insufficient evidence
1965	Other	20	Rival for brother's girl	Mistaken identity—brother's rival took him for competitor	Unknown

* Occurred during a fiesta.

port. At his death, he had no successor, and “the town remained in peace.” 665

In this first political contest, the conflict was interpreted as opposition 621
between the dual divisions. Factional disputes and the sense of political responsibility [829]
and control were contained within these parameters, and any [578]
conflict was conceived of as a threat to territorial balancing mechanisms.

The new factions that have developed since 1963 are tied to economic 621
rather than territorial competition. In 1960 the first truck-owning cooperative 474
was organized under the leadership of the former Ladino secretary. 471
The twenty shareholders of the town had only a small amount of capital 177
in the truck, and the controlling interest was in the hands of the secretary's 178
wife. The cooperative was merely a device to gain business in carrying 494
pottery and wheat from the town to the market centers. In 1963 a new truck-owning cooperative was organized by local Indians. The two brothers, Santiago and José, secured capital to buy the truck from thirty residents of the town without any assistance from outside. The shareholders of the new cooperative came from both sides of the dual division, and from the outlying barrios.

When the leaders of the new cooperative tried to get permits and certificates 474
to license the car and the operator, they were refused by the town 621
president who was a shareholder of the first cooperative. The Indians then 666
hired a Ladino truck driver from the neighboring town, and the son of one of the shareholders served as assistant. They realized that it was necessary to get control of the local political positions in order to extend their operations. With the help of the schoolteacher, they got eighty-one signatures on the petition for the PRI candicacy of one of the brothers, José, in the presidential nomination of 1964. He was opposed by a ladinoized Indian living in one of the barrios who was backed by the Ladino secretary who was leader of the competing trucking cooperative. The opponent did not have a chance of winning, as the leaders of the new cooperative pointed out, because of two strikes against him: he was not a resident of the center and he had only PAN backing. The Indians are aware that nothing can be gained politically by a PAN-backed president since PRI is now the party in control of regional and national offices.

After José's election, the Indian truck driver was able to get a driving license. 621
With the help of the schoolmaster, the cooperative was able to get 474
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621 474 493 permission to extend operations to hot country where the Indians of the town held ejido land. This territory had been controlled by the state-wide trucking sindicate whose monopoly was protected by government permits. On the basis that they were poor, nonprofit-making ejidatarios, the Indians were granted the right to truck corn from the ejido colonies to the highlands. Whenever the cooperative leaders planned to go to the [291] departmental capital to make their appeals, the schoolmaster counseled them to wear their Indian costume—the white shirt and pants with red sash, sandals, and woolen kotonču—in order to play the role of simple campesinos more convincingly. He was aware of the effectiveness of this pose in pro-Indian governmental circles.

665 The PRI leadership in the department capital is neither aware of nor interested in the local factions which seek their support. Their concern is only that the vote is solidly behind regional and national candidates of the party, and they support the group that can mobilize the largest number of votes. A policy of favoritism toward Indians, based on an ideology of *indigenismo,* pro-Indianism, is coupled with a policy of permitting local autonomy. The national committee's program for promoting literacy has never reached this community nor any that I know of in the area. The party's promotion of Indian welfare consists of supporting demands made by Indian constituents and bringing them to the attention of civil service officials assigned to these functions. Party officials thus act as intermediaries between the voters and the bureaucracy of the government, channeling complaints and demands.

621 177 178 181 In the development of factions around new economic interests, the Indians have shifted from an ideology in which the dialectic of conflict was cast in traditional dual-division opposition to one in which the conflict is seen as Indian versus Ladino domination of enterprises. Since these interests cut across the territorial divisions, the economic factions have not crystallized along territorial lines. [665] It is this shift in perspective which makes for the "qualitative" change in local political organization.

COMPETITION BETWEEN CACIQUES

622 563 There are several dimensions to the role of cacique in Tzoˀontahal. First, it is a role created by outside interests and occupied by someone mar-

ginal to the community, either a foreign Indian, as in the case of Agustín, or a Ladino, as in the cases of the secretary and schoolmaster described below. The only indigenous candidate for the role was recently killed. It provokes too much envy for someone socialized in the community; fear of being accused and even killed as a witch or a power-seeker is justified by several such precedents. Those with the skills to become caciques have until recently been effectively incorporated in the existing hierarchy as firmanetik. 622 [563] [626]

Second, the cacique is a gatekeeper, channeling information, goods, and services from the outside to the members of the community. In this capacity, he prefers to pose as a benefactor when he may actually be no more than the distributor of government welfare goods and services.[4]

Third, the role of cacique is one in which the incumbent operates in a local sphere, but depends upon a network of compadrazgo and professional ties outside of the community to assure his position in the community. He must be sufficiently aware of the local idiom in order to avoid making enemies.

Finally, the role is monopolistic. This results in part from the fact that the outside world prefers to deal with a single representative for reasons of expediency. However, new governmental agents are more and more dealing directly with Indians, a factor which has shaken the position of the cacique. The monopolistic quality of the position also stems from the fact that the profit to be gleaned from the community is small. A Ladino from a neighboring town commented that it was worth the time of only one man to exploit an Indian community of the size of Tzoʔontahal. The extractable profit is diminishing as the Indians become more aware of their rights. [178] •

The change in character and range of activities of local caciques is illustrated by the recent careers of two residents of Tzoʔontahal. In the 1950s and until 1964, the Ladino secretary, Don Ramon, had filled the role of cacique. He took advantage of this role not only by collecting a salary and a percentage of court fees, but also by earning money for using his influence in Ladino official circles outside the community. He lent money for interest and subsidized some enterprises such as growing cabbages with Indian partners. 622 177 178 158 [434] [426] [454]

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[4] Goldrich (1965) points to this tactic of politicians who distribute government goods as though they were their own gifts.

159 622 177 partners. He sold a few shares of a truck he and his family owned to Indians,
178 but he retained the controlling interest. His wife was reputed to be
[454] a witch, and was an active curer, combining old and new treatments of illnesses.
[754]
[756] His position was challenged in the 1960s by the Ladino schoolmaster,
159 who had been remarkably unsuccessful from his arrival in 1953 until that
875 time in gaining personal power and influence. His intercession in a local
177 homicide case involving a father's murder of his son outraged the townspeople,
178 some of whom threatened to kill him. His attempts to have water
563 installed aroused the curers against him since they were accustomed to
578 bathing their patients at the source of the spring from which they were debarred
[312] when the plumbing was installed. His demands that children
[756] within the legal age limit should not only attend school but should be prohibited
[871] from marrying until they had completed their schooling caused
[582] the anger of parents who wanted to give their daughters in an early and
profitable marriage.

159 Gradually, however, the schoolmaster extended his own base of support.
875 He minimized his attack on local customs, adhering only to those laws affecting
177 the school population, over which he had a great deal of control.
178 Some of his support came from the orthodox Catholic members of the
563 community; he extended his control through compadre relationships with
557 over eighty members of the community. He showed movies which he acquired
[608] from the United Nations and other educational film sources and
[546] gave away medicines acquired from the health officials in the state capitol
[278] who were his friends. From one of these sources of philanthropy he acquired
[431] wool shawls which he gave to every woman in the town.

The professor demanded no return from the townspeople other than their respect and admiration; he was a person who enjoyed commanding others and needed an arena in which to project his own personality. In his early years in the town, he had to satisfy this need by capturing stray tourists and plying them with soda pop or coffee. His first opportunity to gain
[494] leadership in the local sphere came in 1963, when he supported the new truck-owning cooperative. He used the influence of contacts in the state capital, including compadres, friends, and relatives of his wife's family. He promoted the cooperative's attempt to gain the presidency. One of the first

acts of the new officials was to fire the Ladino secretary and install an Indian 159 875
for the first time. The schoolmaster had won his battle for recognition. 563
In every legal dispute in which the town became involved, the school- 177
master accompanied the town officials as they went to visit departmental 178
and state leaders, acting as their spokesman. He never accepted even expenses 557
for these trips. His satisfaction was in giving advice to the officials
on all matters, in being the man whom outsiders consulted before anything
could be accomplished, and in finding an audience.

The schoolmaster consolidated his position by drawing together all his 159
supporters in a parent-teachers association, which served as a captive audience 875
for his extended monologues. I was called upon as a witness to the in- 871
stallation of the members, and I took advantage of the occasion to record 563
some of the schoolmaster's rhetoric as he addressed the "parents." In attendance 177
were the president, his brother, four members of their truck-owning 178 557
cooperative, and about ten other representatives. The teacher told me [123]
that they were the best people in town—not one of them had killed anyone! [126]
The excerpt below is not complete, but there was sufficient repetition
in the schoolmaster's discourse so that nothing is lost.

Schoolmaster: "I don't fight with anyone. We do not come to fight. A schoolmaster is a guide to teach respect. I have thirty-three years teaching in pueblos of campesinos, poor people like you. I am your brother. I am your teacher. The ignorant people do not want to send their children to school. This is a good school, and there are those of you who have succeeded by learning. Ramon Leon was a boarding school student for two years. He and seven others have received scholarships. They accuse me of not working, but they do not know what is happening in the school. Those who know give congratulations to the school. The children of this school won the competition at the conference of teachers. It is neither a poor school with poor students, nor a rich school with rich students, but all are together. They say we do not teach. Compadre" (to president), *"is this so? They say we only dance, but at the conference our students won the prize.*

"This school is yours. It is better organized than any other. The flag which we had we gave to Villa Las Rosas because they are campesinos;

159 *they are my friends. I prefer to send it there than to Teopisca, because*
875 *they are campesinos.*

871 *"I have proved to you I am a friend of campesinos and of the poor. I*
563 *don't have to say anything if I see that some are killing, that some are dis-*
177 *tilling liquor. This is an affair of the civil authorities, not of me. If some*
● 178 *come to tell me that so and so has killed someone, I close my ears.*

557 *"What is more important in life is what is in your head, not your clothing. Do you understand me?"*

All reply, "Yes, maestro."

"If we are going to win over Teopisca and Villa Las Rosas, our children have to work hard. I had the luck of receiving a medal because I am one of the principal teachers and know the preparation of teachers. The Jefe of Operation put a medal on my breast and gave me an abrazo. *Here is the picture taken two years ago—Lupe get the rag!" Schoolmaster dusts photograph with rag. "Here you see me with the medal on my breast.*

"Who is more important—the one who accuses me and has to put his finger to sign the declaration, or those of you who can write?

"Now the schoolmaster does not give permission to let the children stay away from school. We do not have authority to release the children except for illness. Those children who go most often to school are those who get ahead. They speak idioma [*native language*] *when they play, but when they enter the school they speak* Castellano [*Spanish*].

"Now you know everything. I am happy with you. If there are some who are not happy that I am here, then I shall go happily. There are schools where schoolmasters hit the children. There is a school where the Indian teacher hit a child three times. This is a crime!

"I know where all this talk comes from. Don Ramon [Ladino secretary who supported opposing candidate mentioned above] has a truck—he and Doña Juana. They buy wheat and corn at half price. If the Indians do not pay off, they get double the return at the next harvest. My compadres have come and told me. Those who are with him are traitors to the pueblo. They are being exploited by him. They have two trucks in Teopisca. They come and ask people to sign a paper supporting their candidate. People sign because they are afraid she [Juana] will use witchcraft."

President: "Ramon left her, but then he went back to her because of 159
witchcraft." 875
Schoolmaster "This is the group which is against me and is against the 871
pueblo." 563
Schoolmaster's wife: "You see how happy the pueblo is." She waves her 177
hand to plaza where marimba is playing for the fiesta. "Everything is well 178
organized. Not as it was formerly when Don Ramon was in town." 557

President: "You see how the pueblo is learning. The children are learning to knit. Everyone knits."

Schoolmaster, giving oath of office to parents: "In the name of the Secretary of Public Education, I ask you to serve with faithfulness to the pueblo. The school is the defense of the country. It is preparing you for tomorrow. The society of parents of the school represents you. Your children represent the future of the country in the sign of the three colors, and you have the obligation to defend the country. The country will become great when all the children know how to write. When Mexico has need of its children, the children will be prepared to die for the country. You should see that schools prepare the children. See Mexico is a country united.

"I have been here since 1953. It is not now as it was then. We have water, a highway. You are not in the state you were then.

"Today we see a kiosk." He waves hand to plaza. "Tomorrow we will have a telephone, telegraph, and a factory. It will be a grand pueblo, a civilized pueblo. There was a schoolmaster here who worked two days a week. I have worked every day since 1953. I secured eight scholarships for the children. If there are some who didn't go, it is because their father does not send them. If there are those who say the school does not function, they are traitors to the pueblo. Honorable Society of Fathers of Families, I am the schoolmaster. I shall explain. Give an applause." Applause.

The schoolmaster's discourse reveals several aspects of his position in the 159
town. He indicates the lesson he has learned in avoiding interference in 875
the town's social control system ("I don't have to say anything if I see that 563
some are killing, that some are taking out trago. This is an affair of the 177 178

159 civil officials, not of me"). He identifies himself with the Indians in the
875 fight against the competitive trucking cooperative ("Those who are with
563 him [Don Ramon] are traitors to the pueblo. They are being exploited by
177 him"). While he does not accuse Ramon's wife directly of witchcraft he
178 [754] implies this in saying that people sign their candidate's nomination peti-
[626] tion for president because they are afraid Juana will use witchcraft. This is
a characteristic mode of attacking one's enemies in the town. He claims credit for all of the innovations in the town which have won public approval—the highway, the water supply, electricity, and so forth.

622 The profit motive is inadequate to explain why Ladinos want to play
875 the role of cacique in these corporate Indian communities. One must seek
563 for an explanation instead in the social status they gain. While their jobs
177 are limited and usually frustrating and they can never be completely inte-
178 grated into the community, political activities offer them a larger arena in
which they can derive personal satisfaction. The contrast between the schoolmaster's position in Tzoˀontahal before he became a political leader and his position after finding local supporters illustrates this. In the early days of his residence in town, when he built a chicken coop which extended a few feet beyond the grounds allotted to the schoolhouse, some Indians threatened to kill him. In 1957, I saw him trying to summon a policeman from the town hall, which was adjacent to the schoolhouse, to remove a boulder from the path so that a visiting friend could pass in his automobile. No one heeded his urgent shouts or the whistle he used to call children to school, although they were well aware of what he wanted. But by 1965 there was not a single important transaction which did not require consultation with the schoolteacher. Campesinos from as far as Villa Las Rosas came to request his advice and his help in approaching government agents. In projecting his political role, he gained support for projects
which were of interest to him. When he had succeeded in getting the gov-
[653] ernment to install water pipes and electricity, he talked the civil authori-
[312] ties into building a kiosk, or bandstand, in the plaza. This was a fulfill-
[365] ment of his ambition to make the town over in the image of a colonial
[345] Spanish pueblo. His final statement in the speech quoted above, "Today
we see a kiosk, tomorrow we will have a telephone, telegraph, and a factory!" reveals the symbolic significance it had for him.

578 *to cook their meal in the yard of the church. They threatened to beat the*
793 *priest with the wood, and he retreated into the church. He later announced*
794 *that he would not give mass, or weddings, or baptism. We did*
273 *not mind that he did not give the mass or would not give weddings, but*
the people were frightened if he would not give baptism. The mayordomos
had a meeting, and they agreed to give up drinking in the church if
the priest would continue to give baptism, but they would no longer care
for the pigs or bring wood for him without payment. We pay him fifteen
[465] *pesos for an ordinary mass and forty pesos for a singing mass, so he*
should pay us for help. The priest was in agreement with the mayordomos.

As a result of this edict, the drinking has stopped and the mayordomos no
[264] longer eat the common meal in the church yard. Drinking was an act
linked to eating, since the round of liquor served before the meal was "to
prepare the stomach," and the drink after the meal was "to wash down
the food." The shift to the house of the cofrade was a ready alternative in
this community where the household is a recognized ritual domain.

793 The priest's control over the church has extended to control over the donation
794 boxes and the saints' images. He now receives the money donated
● 178 to the saints and does not permit a public accounting of the funds. Because
of this, the civil officials accuse him of stealing some of the money.
A recent incident recounted below by one of the prayer-reciters led to even
793 more severe censure:
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626 *The bishop visited our church, and when he looked under the silk robes*
578 *of the Virgin Santa Lucia he found a wooden dress covered with gold*
178 *paint. He told the priest to have the cloth dress removed. The people were*
very upset by this since they are very proud of the dresses bought for the
Virgin. One of the prayer-reciters dreamed that the Virgin appeared before
her in tears, saying she did not want to appear nude in public. We [*the*
group of prayer-reciters] *went to see the bishop to demand that the Virgin*
should wear her dress in church and that the priest be sent out of the
town. The bishop refused. He said the Virgin did not feel cold because
she was just a statue. Ha! How could she not feel cold?

The issue of the Virgin's clothing has increased the attacks on the priest. 793
These have been aired in public meetings which take place on Sunday. 794 578
Opposition to the priest has shifted from the old cofrades to the young 178
leadership of the pueblo, men who wish to extend internal control over 626
the church as well as the town hall. They tried to enlist the fiscal's help in
getting rid of the priest, but he refused to cooperate. The president's 793
brother, who serves as town treasurer, recounts the following exchange he 794
had with the priest: 578

I saw Padre Juan take money from the box when I was mayordomo in the church. All of us mayordomos went to talk with him. I asked him how much money was turned in during the fiesta.

"The madres [*lay sisters*] *know," he said, "I don't."*

He called them, and they said, "We haven't counted the money. Come tomorrow."

The priest was very angry that we asked for an account. Pablo [*the fiscal*] *was too afraid to talk with him. When we left the church, I told Pablo, "You are in charge of the church. Why didn't you demand an account of the money in front of the church? We never got an account."*

Then we began to fight. Padre Juan doesn't want to leave the town. He has it too good here. He has a good yard with many fruit trees and a nice house. The Ladinos in Teopisca don't let him stay in their convento overnight. [829] *They are sharp, those damned Ladinos! We pay the padre thirty pesos every Sunday. Before he lived here, we used to have good music and more firecrackers for fiestas. Now he wants to stop all this. He was the one who ordered that all the money be collected. We wanted to go buy a gross of firecrackers. He said, "Why do you want firecrackers? It is the mass that has value. The saints don't want firecrackers or music."*

He is very smart, the padre. He wants to keep the money for himself. Now we just get two firecrackers each morning of the fiesta and two in the evening. In Teopisca, they fire dozens of firecrackers. Here what is left over from the contributions for the fiesta remains in the box, and he takes it.

I went to get new clothing for the saint. In Comitán they wanted two

794 while he was fiscal. He let control over the key to the church and the do-
793 nation boxes slip into the hands of the priest. His opponents accused him
of weakness and failure to act in the interest of the town. The careers of
[685] these fiscales illustrate the pitfalls for those filling the post. First, there is
the temptation for personal gain, since the fiscal has access to the money of
the saints: in the past three fiscales have been charged with robbery. Sec-
[178] ond, there is the problem that the fiscal serves two masters, the priest and
the head cofrade, each of whom has different standards of conduct for the
role: when the selection of the fiscal was in the hands of the cofrades, they
chose a man who knew the pat'o'tan and who was to deal directly with
the curers in rituals at the cave of the ancestors and in the homes of the
cofrades; now he is chosen by the priest who prefers a young, literate man.
793 If the fiscal follows the commands of the priest, he runs into problems
794 with the cofrades. This was the difficulty with Antonio, who was put out
578 of office by the cofrades because he yielded to the priest's demands to improve the convento and the church. As long as the conflict in interests between the priest and the traditional authorities exist, there is no successful position for the fiscal to take.

CONFLICT AND SOCIAL CHANGE

621 In the contest for leadership which has and is occurring, the following
177 observations can be made on the basis of the events described.
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[212] 1. The community has successfully incorporated the young, literate men into the framework of the traditional hierarchy. This has been accomplished by expanding the scope of activities of the president and síndico and by relieving them of serving in the lower posts of the hierarchy.

2. The ceremonial role of the principales serves as a symbol of continuity in government both in the tie they have with the past and in the annual changeover of officials.

[609] 3. The threat of foreign Indians in the township misusing their skills in dealing with the outside world has been overcome by removing them from office and preventing them from filling high posts.

621 177 178

4. In a series of confrontations, the civil officials have challenged the social control functions of the curers. Witch-killings in which many of the victims have been curers have minimized but not overcome the power of these men. [756]

5. The priest has succeeded in establishing control over the church, but the Indians may yet succeed in deposing him, a plan they were putting into effect when I left town. [793]

The Indians are now aware of their rights to limit—or eliminate if necessary—the self-appointed caciques. The new cacique promotes the community welfare not only in his rhetoric but in the services he performs for the officials. His involvement in political affairs is tolerated, not encouraged, and the officials are ready to turn to alternative sources of aid in their activities. 641 622 177 178

The involvement of the PRI in local elections has not introduced a new center of power in the political arena. Political factions are based on economic interests contained within the town, and the autonomy of the town has in no way been affected by leadership from party headquarters in the state capitol. The community and the party use each other for their own ends in almost complete ignorance of what is occurring in the domain of the other. 665 621 178

The system of beliefs and understandings has changed along with these organizational changes. The most significant change has been the waning belief in the guardianship of the ancestors. The absence of the curers at the fiesta of the caves means that they no longer have this ritual occasion to validate their claims by communicating with the ancestors. The loss of leadership and of a hierarchy of prestige within the ranks of curers has removed internal controls over the profession and further undermined their position. The diminishing respect with which they are treated in the town hall and the increasing number of murders of curers accused of witchcraft is directly related to the loss of belief in their power as guardians. Since they were not an integral part of the civil-religious hierarchy, as the curers were in Oxchuk (Villa Rojas 1947), this has not upset the hierarchy, but it has changed the balance of power in the wider community. 769 756 178 [683]

The diminishing significance of the leadership of the principales is tied 621 756 178

621 to the loss of belief in the curers. The principales were formerly conceived
756 to be overseers of the curers, men who, because of their advanced age,
• 178 could determine whether the curers were acting in the interest of the town. With the loss of this social control function, along with the loss of other functions such as holding public funds and helping the judges to interpret the law, they have declined to the level of ceremonial figures dissociated from political action.

621 The forms of political organization remain the same, but there has been
178 a shift in the balance of power from leaders whose authority rested on guardianship linked with the ancestors to leaders who can deal with the external power structure. The emergent forms of political organization can be partially assessed in the meaning participants assign to the events which precipitated this process of change. To paraphrase George Herbert Mead (1938:liii) it is the "organization of perspectives" concerning the past events and the present conditions which will effect the emergent
829 forms. The analytical problem can be phrased with the questions, "In
578 what dialectical terms is the conflict cast?" and "What changes do the
794 members of the community perceive as an outcome of the struggle?"
621 Whereas in the colonial period the conflict between the Indians and their
177 Spanish conquerers was seen as a struggle for control between Catholicism
178 and traditional religion, today the conflict is phrased as one of opposed economic interests. In the civil sphere, factional opponents seek the support of extra-communal power holders to gain their ends. In the religious
[193] sphere, the Indians see the conflict as one in which their control over the church and the income derived from it is opposed to the priest's growing influence.

829 In this reorganization of perspectives, the Indians share some of the
621 goals of the dominant society, but they continue to oppose themselves to
182 the Ladino world. For this reason they are willing to preserve the form of the civil-religious hierarchy as a means of asserting their independence from the dominant society. They see the community not only as a defensive screen against the outside world, but as a springboard for entry into the national economic and political life. They are now consciously taking advantage of pro-Indian sentiment to secure a preferred position in this society. Their awareness of their advantage over the deculturated Indian is

made explicit in the contrasts they make between their conditions and 829
those of the migratory mestizo laborers who work in the sawmills and 62
fincas in the area. They comment on the fact that these workers have no 182
political representation and that they and their children are illiterate and
do not attend school. The significant factor is that the Indians of the
corporate communities not only have advantages over the mestizo worker,
but they perceive these advantages and are acting in terms of them. The [156]
preservation of community traditions is seen as a means of retaining com-
munity-owned assets and of maintaining a sense of self which is threat-
ened or destroyed when the individual Indian enters into the national so-
ciety.

The rules of strategy for moving in the direction of change are a trans- 829
formation of the rules of the game that the Indians hve played in the four 621
and a half centuries since the Conquest. The overall strategy is still defen- 178 •
sive and aimed at preserving local independence, but their tactics include 177
new skills acquired from Ladinos. In opposing the old power elite of the 626
curing hierarchy, the present leadership uses the same tactics of the witch- [756]
hunt that their opponents used in the past to punish deviates, but they are [754]
beginning to confront them openly when sorcery is suspected. Leaders of
the new cooperatives state that their aim is to increase opportunities for
the whole community, not to make individual profit.

Because the conflict has been contained within community boundaries, 621
the statement of goals remains the same. These goals include the retention 178
of control by local leaders over judgment of guilt or innocence, in ceremo- 177
nial affairs, and by all townspeople over land. This retention of local con- 185
trol is the key feature of a moving equilibrium in a model of change that
puts the emphasis on continuous adjustments and adaptations. In the
usual models for discussing modernization, the confrontation is conceived
as one between the indigenous society and the outsider representing west-
ern influence. In Tzoʔontahal, young leaders within the community have
confronted old in the stated interest of preserving tradition. Occasionally
they may make alliances with the old leaders as in the conflict with the
priest.

These "shifts in the focus of political power within a given system" 621
(Leach 1964:9) are the prelude to structural change. Tzoʔontahal as a case 177
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example demonstrates the large input of local energies in bringing about change, both the changes that lead to internal restructuring of the distribution of power as well as those necessary in the introduction of new technology and organization of economic activity. It defeats the notion of the non-western segment of the world as a passive recipient of the gifts of the West.

554 the status. Community integration is achieved at the expense of limiting the range of roles through restricted recruitment and validating mechanisms.

621 794 [182] *Alternation and linkage in office-holding.* The principle of alternation between civil and religious posts serves to integrate these officers in a single functioning system and prevents the development of segmented groups. The alternation of offices between sides of the dual divisions helps to integrate the village by pairing or alternating them in the same office. Some roles served as links between the institutional domaines. Principales are the primary symbolic leaders of both hierarchies since they are chosen from among men who have completed service in both hierarchies. The alfereces formerly symbolized the unity of the civil and religious branches in the transfer of banners from the cabildo to the church and in other ceremonial duties.

621 624 794 [692] [184] The regidores and judges have remained identified with the civil authority in Tzoʼontahal, although in other towns in the area they have become almost exclusively identified with the religious hierarchy (Cancian 1965). The regidores were formerly involved in religious affairs during the household celebration for the installation of the new alférez. At this time they were called personaetik from the Spanish term persona, or personage.

731 756 178 621 Events requiring community action reveal some of the links which unite officials who play roles in different institutional settings. On the occasion of an epidemic, curers are called before the civil authority to "give an account" of who is causing the witchcraft. Formerly the curers were linked to the civil hierarchy by a system of social control in which the principales, as elders, reviewed their actions in guarding the safety and health of the community. This system of checks and balance has been broken by the shift in power from the principales to the president.

794 621 182 The nakawanehetik provide the links between the household and the civil and religious hierarchies. They transmit the knowledge of ritual prayer and acts and officiate at the inauguration of officials. They serve as stage directors in maintaining the traditional household rituals and in ensuring continuity in public ceremonials.

been made, there is no recourse but to kill the man since he may retaliate 682 683
by killing his accuser (this occurred in two of the cases noted in Table
29).

Conflict between generations in the role sets father/son and father/son- 593
in-law stems from delay in carrying out role responsibilities. Fathers are 606
expected to provide the money for the costs of betrothal, and to give their 578
children shares of the patrimony including ~~both~~ land and livestock. The [584] [425]
scheduling of when this should occur is often a matter of dispute, result-
ing in at least two cases of homicide in the period analyzed.

New economic enterprises have exacerbated the tensions rising from 152
envy. Foster (1965) has suggested that envy stems from the notion of the 156
"limited good," requiring the strategy of a "zero sum game" (Bennet 178
1966). The fact that the new wealth is evidence of new opportunities, not 556
a subtraction from a given resource supply, has not entered the cognitive 754
awareness of the people. The prospering leaders of these enterprises feel
themselves to be particularly vulnerable to the envy of others and thus to
the charge of witchcraft. There have been several open attacks on new [474]
leaders accused as witches; the leader of the truck cooperative, for exam-
ple, was murdered in 1966. Six men have been killed as cattle thieves in [685]
the past ten years.

The economic roles created with the introduction of new enterprises 177
have not been integrated in the traditional pattern of recruitment and con- 178
trol. In the association of cattle breeders, leadership tends to be based on 554
the size of the herd; in the case of the truck cooperative, amount of capital 621
invested and entrepreneurial skills have determined the leadership of the
enterprise, while driving skill and ability to get along in the Ladino world
has been the basis for choice of drivers. Such achievement principles as the
basis for recruitment into these envied positions are not accepted in the
same way that age and passage through a hierarchy of posts validated
higher positions in the old hierarchies. The conspicuous expenditure of [556]
wealth in the more expensive posts in the religious hierarchy has also [794]
failed to lessen hostility aroused by the increasing disparity in wealth, and [754]
in fact those who have served as alférez have been even more subject to
witchcraft aroused by envy.

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Unorthodox behavior after drinking is less subject to censure than that 273
indulged in without this stimulus. 276

The social changes affecting the community have not changed the 621
categories of roles. What has happened is a shift in the power and 554
authority associated with civil roles: the president's role for example 178
has assumed importance over that of the principales. A full account of the changes in the role system requires a discussion of the settings in which they are enacted, the timing which gives them coherence, and the beliefs which give them meaning. Summary statements on role coordination will be given in the final chapter.

695 minimum of explicit rules. Very little is ruled out of order, and almost nothing introduced is considered irrelevant. The dialogue is primarily between the judge and claimant and secondarily between judge and defendant. [693] The rural judges join with the regidores, who act as court clerks when a case is heard, in a kind of Greek chorus when consensus is reached regarding statements made by defendant or claimant. The judges indicate clearly their approval or disapproval of the statements being made, and throughout the case, consensual verdicts are made in an apparently spontaneous manner. No one pretends to be impartial. Personal knowledge of the defendant or claimant is introduced into the case.

Courtroom behavior falls into three major acts: (1) the declaration by the claimant, (2) the questioning of the defendant (literally the "taking of the heart"), and (3) the paying of the fine. The judge introduces the first act by asking the claimant to "come and speak" so that they can "listen [576] and hear." This ends formally with the claimant saying, "Good day, Elder Brother." The judge introduces the second act when he turns to the defendant, who stands before the civil officials, and says, "Speak and we shall listen, boy. What goes with you?" The defendant sums up his defense in the questioning period. The president introduces the final act, telling the defendant, "When you give a little fine you will be free."

[641] [273] [178] Both claimant and defendant pay court fees, an acknowledgment of the feeling that both are guilty because they are involved in a dispute. Before the term of the incumbent president began, this was paid in two liters of illegally distilled liquor, a kind of symbolic defiance of federal law. Now, since the president drinks only beer, it is paid in two family-sized bottles of beer. The etiquette of courtroom drinking is prescribed: the bottle, referred to as *smahtan,* or gift, is passed to the judge, who goes to the president and presents it to him with a few words of the patʔoʔtan giving thanks for the gift. The fourth regidor then measures out the liquor, giving the first shot to the president, the next to the first judge and so on around the room. [264] If a large fine is paid by the defendant, the president orders the police to buy meat, and a "common meal" is prepared and eaten.

693 695 In this society, there are neither veniremen nor specialized advocates. Civil officials other than the first judge act as jurors, announcing their sentiments in unison. The judge, rather than handing down a decision, sums up the consensus of the group. Kinsmen of the claimant and defendant act

The townspeople feel that they own the 346
church, and many resent the intrusion of the priest who resides sometimes 793
two or three days a week in the adjoining rectory. In the past five years, 794
however, the priest has succeeded in asserting more control over the 177
church: he has forbidden drinking in the church or in the courtyard, a 178
prohibition that resulted in an open confrontation with the leading cofrade (Chapter 9); and he now controls the keys to the church and to the money boxes, formerly the responsibility of the fiscal. The two lay sisters who are in residence during the week hold the keys and are in charge of the upkeep of the church.

People always show respect for the church by removing their hats as 346
they pass the entrance, even when they are at a distance. As they enter the 526
church, they always kneel and cross themselves. They may spit on the 788 [514]
floor of the church, for this is not a sign of disrespect.

The complementarity of church and cabildo is still formally recognized 621
in ceremonial events: participants bow to the church and then to the cabildo 794
during processions. The transfer of sacred symbols from one locale 182
to the other at the time of the inauguration of civil and religious officials ceremonially signifies the integration of civil and religious authority, despite the growing separation in day-to-day functions in each of the domains.

The church serves as a staging platform for the images and symbolic of- 346
ferings to them in the annual cycle of ceremonies. During the nine days of 796
ceremony accorded to the major saints, their images are moved to the center of the altar or to the center of the nave. The staging effects are particularly notable during the fiesta of Holy Week, when the reenactment of the
crucifixion is performed in the nave. The mayordomos, under the direc- [794]
tion of the fiscal and the lay sisters, move the saints about and prepare adornments of flowers and pine needles.

The church is the locus for the weekly mass given by the priest. The [562]
men stand on the left side of the church (facing the altar), while the
women kneel or sit on the floor to the right. A few benches near the altar [563]
are occupied by the Ladinos of the area who attend the mass. The lay sis- [794]
ters indicate to the congregation when they should kneel and rise in response to the cues of the sermon or mass.

In addition to these scheduled events, the church serves as a locus where 346
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776 individuals can visit the saints on their own personal missions. Appendix
782 3A records the visits of groups and individuals on an ordinary Sunday.
Their actions in the church are part of the standardized behavior incumbent upon all those who enter the building.

Communication with the saints is ensured either by touching and kissing their images or, if the images are enclosed in glass cases, by tapping
the glass with offerings of money. It is believed that one gains an audience
[562] by paying for it. When groups larger than individual clusters of visitors
enter the church, sexual segregation is observed (for example, when a
male child enters with his mother on the occasion of a mass, he remains
with her until more people arrive, then leaves her to stand on the male
[788] side of the nave). Ritualized wailing is done by women only. After such a
[152] demonstration the women show normal composure, since wailing is a
standardized mode of communication, not an outburst of uncontrolled
emotion. It is private and concerns the individual wailer and the saint to
which she appeals; none of the other visitors in the church indicates any
sign of response to these displays. Unless there is a focused activity going
[794] on, such as a mass or series of baptisms, each visiting group is an autonomous unit, carrying out its own mission.

794 People visit the church most commonly in pairs of two. They congre-
571 gate for mass in a pattern in which women and children enter first, and
562 men, who linger in the plaza until the church is partially filled, enter in
clusters and take their places on the male side of the nave. The religious and civil officials enter last, and the mayordomos, whose attendance is one of the obligations of their post, move toward the altar at the front. Men attend church less frequently than do women.

THE SCHOOL

346 Unlike the church, the school is regarded as an alien structure. Assist-
621 ance in reconstruction and maintenance is given under pressure rather
875 than voluntarily. Until fairly recently, schoolteachers too remained uninte-
[177] grated in the community. In the early years of the school's existence, there
[178] was a rapid turnover of teachers. The employment of a schoolmaster with
a wife and daughters stabilized the position after 1953. The school has be-

come the domain of the schoolmaster, who represents federal influence in 346
the local community. He has rebuilt parts of the structure in the thirteen 621
years he and his family have lived and worked in this building; it was his 875
fortress when the Indians threatened to kill him for building a chicken
coop obtruding into the street, and again when he interceded in a case of
homicide. He has a small arsenal stored in his bedroom in preparation for
any reversal of his position in the community. The school is his platform,
the area he controls and from which he shouts to his compadres—the
storekeeper, the fiscal, and the president—to come speak with him.

The long building is subdivided into four classrooms and the living 346
quarters of the schoolmaster's family. The classrooms are furnished with 352
crude benches and tables; blackboards and charts of birds, animals, and 353
the alphabet decorate the walls. The back porch, converted to classrooms 872
to accommodate the three hundred and fifty children, overflows with
benches. The students' own materials—a notebook, pencil, and erasers—
are provided by their parents. When a notebook is filled, the students
industriously erase all the marks and reuse the book until it falls apart.

When I was in the village, the schoolmaster often encouraged visitors to 621
share a Coca-Cola with him in his office. Here, surrounded by his books, 875
his collection of artifacts of both genuine and spurious origin, a picture of [346]
the district inspector of federal schools pinning a medal on his chest, the [353]
flag of the Mexican republic, he could speak freely of the personal attacks
and frustrations and of the rare satisfactions he encountered "in bringing
civilization to the town." As he began to build up his political power in
the community, the president and síndico often consulted with him on
town affairs. Agents of the federal or departmental offices who came to
town frequently communicated with him directly before going to the cabildo.
The school became the arena for working out political programs
and strategies. The schoolmaster prided himself on being the primary
channel of communication between the outside world and the village.

The conflict of interest between the schoolmaster and the parents of the 872 875
children over attendance in school has been ameliorated in recent years 578
with the acceptance by some of the parents of education as an advantage. 177
In the early years of compulsory education, physical force was used to 178
round up the children. The traumatic experience of his first day in school 872 177

3. Categories of role-bearers sit and act together in all the domains. 571
In the home the meʔeletik, the nakawanehetik, and the b'alnialetik have 554
established seats and act in concert. Similarly in the cabildo, four ranks 576
of officials, the principales, judges, regidores, and police, move and act together. In the church, elder and younger mayordomos move in pairs of two.

4. Sexual segregation is present in the home, the church, and the 562
cabildo, but is lacking in the school. This rejection of the community 871
standard for a group situation was the basis for some parents holding 177
their children out of school until coerced by the federal authorities 178 •
backed by the local officials.

5. Attendance in all domains involves coercion as well as voluntary action. Coercion is most marked in the school, but resistance by the parents to forced attendance and mixing of the sexes is fast wearing down in this domain. In the cabildo, the defendant is required to attend the court hearing and may even be jailed if he does not pay the fines charged against him. Coercion is covert in the home; the lack of alternative housing arrangements makes residence in the household of orientation or of procreation mandatory.

6. Sacred symbols are present in all the domains. The symbols of the cabildo and of the school relate the community to the nation with
the national flags and the portraits of the president. The canes of [293]
office which are assumed as each official acquires office are symbols of
local authority. The universalistic symbols of the church—the saints im- 778
ages, portraits, and banners—are acquired from Catholic orthodoxy, but 177
have been encapsulated with local sentiments and beliefs. Sacred symbols 178
are treated with respect and avoidance, both in the church and the home. 788
The "holy cross" or banners are touched only with sacred embroidered cloths binding the hands of those who carry them. Saints' images are
kissed, but as a mark of respect, not intimacy. The Mexican flag, with 186
which less awe is associated, is saluted.

Each of the domains provides a setting for the recognition and valida- 621
tion of authority figures in the community. Values which are communally 177
shared or imposed from outside are formally instilled in these settings. Ex- 178

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177 tra-institutional supports are still lacking for the school, which is not yet
178 fully incorporated into the community framework.

Replication of behavior in all of the institutional domains except the
621 school provides a measure of social integration in the community. Pat-
571 terned behavior, such as the set speeches of the patˀoˀtan, the formalized
177 drinking procedure including the blessing of the drink and the serving of
182 it in accordance with age and authority ranking of the participants, the eti-
554 quette of greeting and leave-taking, the embrace signifying ritual guardianship, occurs in the home, the town hall, and the church. These sets of stereotyped behavior, specified according to roles, simplify the movement from one institutional setting to another and contribute to continuity in role performance by the individual. The new patterns of behavior introduced in the school—desegregation of the sexes, competition in performance, grading of achievement—are not modes of behavior which have spread. However, as the skills acquired in school assume greater importance in the community, it is likely that the socializing procedures with which they were transmitted may spread to the home.

805 lating the time of day; when I questioned them as to the hour, they were
often as much as an hour off, usually behind.

Most activities are ordered with reference to the Gregorian calendar, but
the twenty-day Maya calendrical month, defined as "twenty days or a
month" is used in much the same way that we use "a fortnight." The Indians
805 consider the moon to be an uncertain indicator of time, since "she
821 does not walk well." But the moon is important in the culture: people
note its different phases and are especially aware of the phase under which
a child is born—an important sign for the newborn's future. If a baby is
[856] born at the full moon, he is expected to mature more readily. The full
[787] moon also signifies a propitious time for undertaking certain activities,
such as cutting wood for the main posts of a house and cutting palm for
the roof.

THE DAILY SCHEDULE

512 Daily activities are organized by traditional economic pursuits. The
462 woman is the first one to rise in the morning. She gets up at dawn, lights
[252] the fire, and sets a jar of water to boil for coffee. She grinds the nixtamal
cooked the night before on the stone grinding board, or takes it to the mill
[412] in the center. She then makes tortillas either by hand or with a press; a recent
[177] innovation made of two hinged pieces of wood in which the ball of
[178] dough is set between pieces of plastic paper.

The men of the household are served first, followed by the boys; the
[264] women and girls eat last. As soon as they have eaten, the men and boys
who have finished the required three years of schooling go out to the
[481] fields to work. They walk single file even in the streets of the town, the father
[482] preceding his sons. Each carries a machete, net bag, tumpline, and
[411] sheepskin back-protector if he plans to carry any loads. Many bring shotguns
[224] as well in order to hunt for field rats, raccoon, or the burrowing animals
they find in the fields.

After the men leave, the women go to the porch and "seize their work."
[857] The children go to school, which begins at eight-thirty in the morning
[872] and continues until five o'clock in the evening. They return home for
[264] lunch, a meal of tortillas, coffee, and sometimes beans or chayote when it
is in season.

Women work steadily at making pottery. Older girls help with household 512
tasks from the time they are six in order to permit their mothers to 462
make pottery. They bring the water from the faucets installed at every [323]
other corner of the streets in the center, degrain corn, and when they are [857]
about ten years of age assist in grinding corn or bring the cooked corn to [312]
the mill. In three-generation families, the older woman tends to the tasks [252]
of preparing the meals while the younger women make pottery.

The men work uninterruptedly at agricultural tasks, taking only a noon [241]
break to eat a lunch of tortillas, coffee, and sometimes beans. During periods [264]
of intensive activity, women or children bring a hot lunch to the fields.
At about three-thirty they return home, sometimes stopping to collect firewood [313]
along the way. When they arrive home, there are no greetings. [576]
They deposit their loads of harvested crops, firewood, or *zacate* (leaves
and grasses to pack pottery). The children pick these up and bring them [857]
into the kitchen with no words spoken. The men sit on the bench of the [461]
porch, sometimes assisting their wives with degraining, and "rest their
heart" until supper is served about six o'clock. The final task of the day is [252]
cooking the nixtamal for the following day's meals. The family retires [513]
about eight o'clock.

The weekly scheduling of household celebrations indicates the thorough 796
absorption of the Catholic calendar into the social schedules of the town. 177
The choice of Saturday and Sunday for most household celebrations is 178
geared to a week in which Sunday is a day of rest. 512

Other significant days of the week are Thursday and Friday. Thursday 796
is thought to be the day when "the earth is open." House curing fiestas are 512
scheduled on this day since the earth of the house floor can receive its gift [782]
of liquor. This is also the appropriate day to visit the caves to ask for crops
and cattle, or to make payment with candles. Friday has a sacred quality [262]
because of the crucifixion, but except during Holy Week and Lent the
townspeople ignore any proscription on eating meat.

THE ANNUAL CYCLE 221

The annual ceremonial cycle of religious rituals and life crisis events establish 796
the pattern by which the people schedule their economic activities.
Since the township gained dependence in 1931, there is no forced labor on 175
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These time and space patterns provide the individual with a cognitive structure which enables him to function appropriately in a given setting and to plan his future actions. Having one piece of information, people can derive the other understandings necessary to adjust their own behavior to the expectations of others. 181 [805] [571]

Time as a measure of value has been affected by changes occurring in the past two decades. Men are less willing to expend time in ceremonial activities than formerly. The first ceremony given up was Carnival, which has not been celebrated for over a decade. Most recently, young men have refused to become alfereces, and their resistance on the basis of loss of time and money was formally recognized in 1966 when the institution was abolished. The resistance parents used to show to their children spending, or wasting their time in school has given way as some of the more modernized parents have seen the advantages of education. 181 177 178 [796] [794] [871]

The tempo of life has accelerated with the increasing importance of bus and truck transportation to market. Women's time has always figured as importantly as that of the men because of their pottery production, and they have quickly accepted time-saving innovations such as the tortilla press and the corn-grinding mill. They have not shown any inclination to adopt time-saving technology, such as the potter's wheel, in pottery-making since they have no knowledge of it, and using it would require relearning basic tasks. 181 177 178 462 823 [252]

The ceremonial cycle still provides the major consideration in programming other activities in the community. The Indian as an agriculturalist remains master of his own time, and he plans his work so that he can fulfill his ceremonial obligations. 181 796

Chapter 13

Belief and Behavior in a Changing Society

181 177 178 Continuity is the theme stressed in the rules of the game that apply to living in the square world of the community. The framework of continuity is the landscape itself with the ancestral hills and devils' caves reminding people of the moral order of the past. Repetitive behavior in rituals symbolically projects the past into the future, and behavioral schema in pottery and agricultural production reinforce the belief that all remains the same. The conditions making for change stem from the very attempts to preserve the existing equilibrium. A rising population on a limited land base using colonial techniques of cultivation is bringing about an increasing reliance on outside markets for the sale of labor and the purchase of goods. [423] [621] The ejido program which has perpetuated the system of subsistence cultivation has at the same time increased the dependency on external political influence and undermined dependency on parents. Some of the rules of strategy that have developed in response to changes coming from outside the community can no longer be justified by the beliefs that govern behavior within its boundaries. The community is now in crisis: people are losing faith in the old beliefs and have not yet developed a meaningful ideology for new strategies.

[241] [323] [464] [871] The crisis does not affect all institutions equally. It is absent in the traditional economic activities of milpa cultivation and pottery production. It is incipient in the households, especially where there are wage-workers in nonagricultural jobs. It is more apparent in the civil than in the religious sphere, and it is most manifest in the new economic activities. The school, as an externally imposed institution, generates awareness of the conflict between old beliefs and the ideology of nationalism, but until recently receptivity to these ideas has been limited. 000 The behavior described for each in-

The behavior described for each in-
stitution in earlier chapters will be summarized as a mode of adjustment 128
or adaptation in relation to the beliefs that give it meaning and purpose.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

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Learning agricultural tasks and pottery-making in the household is part 241
of adjusting to membership in the community. Parents are responsible for 323
teaching the value of industriousness and are held accountable throughout
the life of the child. Agricultural tasks are scheduled in a yearly cycle that 241
provides sufficient flexibility for a man to carry out community and fami- 177
lial ceremonial responsibilities. In milpa agriculture, there is no specializa- 178
tion of tasks. Small-plot agricultural production with a simple technology 423
has been reinforced by the land reform program. Since the lands incorpo- 621
rated under the Ejido Commission in the 1930s were attached to the community, agriculturalists were not forced to adjust to new ecological conditions. Politicalization was minimal since the local commission operated within the old civil hierarchy. In the recent expansion of ejido colonies in hot country, Indians from the community have developed alliances with non-Indians in asserting claims to the land. Without any preexisting civil hierarchy, these ejidatarios have not had to adjust their activities to a given structure of authority, but have developed independent political organizations as an adaptation to their new environment.

Women's work in pottery is less subject to changes in techniques and or- 323
ganization than is men's. The schema of production in simple tasks in a 177
fixed sequence makes it easier to teach girls each process and reinforces a 178
given pottery tradition. My guess would be that if wheel production were introduced, it would liberate the creativity of each potter by freeing her of established routines.

Pottery production is not surrounded, as is agricultural production, by 323
ceremonials. There is no god to whom one lights candles or gives offerings 241
to ensure success, although there are hazards in production, particularly at 776
the time of firing. Agricultural productivity, on the other hand, is thought [796]
to depend on the proper relation between the spirits of the heaven and of the church with the spirits of crops.

In the new economic activities, the Indians have shown both adjustive 177

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177 and adaptive responses. With the expansion of cattle raising, Indians have
178 organized associations adjusted to the traditional dual division. The asso-
621 ciation for each side of the dual division mobilizes labor for maintaining
476 the watering holes. The failure to organize communal corrals means that
312 inefficient herding techniques, damage to the milpa, and frequent loss or
[685] theft of cattle persist. The association reacts to the last problem by hiring
killers to get rid of those suspected of theft, but this adaptive response is
limited to dealing with particular incidents and has not solved the prob-
lem.

548 The manufacturers of contraband liquor have succeeded in organizing a
273 syndicate strong enough to maintain a monopoly price for both the inter-
177 nal and external markets and to provide security for themselves against
178 federal agents. The syndicate mobilizes for specific actions, such as raising
[435] the bail bond for imprisoned members or punishing informers. As a com-
[694] munity-wide organization ignoring the dual division and age-ranked sen-
[681] iority, it represents an adaptation in response to extra-community pres-
[621] [561] sures.

The cooperatives that have been organized to manage the local store
474 and the trucks provide permanent managerial operations that are an adap-
177 tition to growing interaction in extra-community economic activities.
178 Cooperative owners are able to raise the capital to maintain and expand
these operations. It is within these structures that entrepreneurial skills are
being developed. The organizers gain the advantage not only of socializ-
ing the risk of loss but also of making a profit in a community where be-
lief in witchcraft, fostered by envy, is rampant.

474 Activities in the new economic enterprises are not supported by any su-
472 pernatural belief. In order to gain acceptance for the new enterprises, the
177 entrepreneur Santos, who had organized the trucking cooperative, recog-
178 nized the need for an ideology. His rhetoric drew upon the sense of depri-
vation Indians feel in their relations with Ladinos. He justified his own
ends as an attempt to gain for all the community the profits that only La-
dinos had been able to gain through trucking and crops resales in the re-
gional markets. The ideology he had begun to formulate stressed eco-
nomic and political independence from both the Ladino entrepreneurs of
neighboring towns and government agents who tried to promote welfare

programs in the interest of "civilizing" the Indians. This formulation in- 474
volved a basic contradiction between the goal of moving into regional and 472
national networks and that of keeping the old autonomy and independ- 177
ence of the corporate community. He never had to face that contradiction. 178
Unable to gain adherents other than the small group of profit-sharers in [682]
the cooperative he organized, he was killed by opponents within the community.

THE FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD

The core of the traditional culture lay in the local power hierarchies pat- 608
terned on the familial model of age-ordered paternal authority institution- 571
alized in the meʔiltatil. The meʔiltatil of the household have provided a 578
flexible institution for adjusting conflict within the kin group. Their role 182
in directing ritual performances preserves a sense of continuity in life cycle changes.

The institutionalized authority of the elders has not been upset by the 561
trend toward residence based on nuclear families, which is an adjustment 182
to the pressure of limited space in the town center. Kinship ties are contin- 602
ually reinforced by rituals that draw together the meʔiltalil as sponsors of 608
ceremonies marking baptism, marriage, and death. This group of sponsor- 591
ing relatives has absorbed the institution of compadrazgo, adding compa- 626
dres to the network of affinally-and bilaterally-related kin. The procedures 221
for adjusting conflict among members of the household and extended fam- 578
ily networks reinforce the authority of the elders. When adjustive pro- [681]
cesses in the house and court "arrangements" and in curing ceremonies [762]
fail, the only recourse is for one of the disputants to leave the community or commit homicide.

Ceremonies within the household provide a model for the rules of the 561
game that apply to adjustive behavior in the community. The household 182
officials introduce new officials into their role, teaching them the prayers and directing the proceedings. Their authority depends upon age and pres-
tige acquired in office. The meʔiltatil, as the elders of the family, are the [769]
direct link with the ancestors. They and the nakawane provide the strongest force for preserving the ways of the ancestors.

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RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOR

776 Socialization of the child includes teaching him how to adjust to spirits of the house and of the surrounding hills and springs as well as to people in his social environment. He learns the obligations he owes to these spirits in the rituals of house inauguration and curing. Place spirits are given an ethnic identity. The ancestor figures who live in the cave are Indians from whom all the people originate. The Ladino spirits residing in the houses and springs are a mythological projection of a conquered people who have learned to coexist with their conquerors by paying tribute of candles, food, liquor, and entertainment. If the spirits are not won over, they will admit the evil spirits who bring sickness and death. Their presence is known only by the trouble they permit rather than by good occurences; the miracles they perform are an undoing of the harm they have permitted.

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789 The belief in the potentially dangerous nature of these spirits when their envy or appetite is aroused is linked to an understanding that men and gods alike are jealous and vindictive. It generates behavior that is in conformity with that of the ancestors. A sense of security is reinforced by the protective symbols of incense, the cross of palm hung on the entrance posts of the yard and house, candles which "blind the eye of the devil," and garlic mixed with hot herbs which exude an odor that evil spirits dislike. [755] When the uneasy contract between spiritual and human coresidents is upset, a curing ritual is performed to make everyone "of one heart." [571] Behavior with respect to both spirits and people stems from a policy of appeasement through entertainment and liquor provided in household ceremonials. [273]

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178 Behavior differs in regard to the category of saints called "spirits in the heaven" and those called "spirits in the church." Spirits of the heavens have incorporated pre-Conquest deities with those introduced by the missions. They are a more powerful force influencing human moral behavior. [834] [784] Illicit sexual relations carried out in the milpa by day are believed to arouse the envy of "Our Father the Sun" who will cause the milpa to burn by refusing to give way to rain. Similarly "Our Grandmother the

Moon" will not give way to the sun if her envy is aroused by seeing such 776
things. These spirits of the heavens have greater control over natural 177
forces than the spirits of the church, or saints. The saints have only limited 178 [834]
influence over the souls of particular crops and chickens; people say "they [784]
are just of the pueblo."

The distinction between the "big saints of the church" and the lesser 776
saints is recognized in the rituals accorded each group. Four of the saints 776
are given big fiestas which are longer, require more expenditures, and in- 177
volve more people than the fiestas for the lesser saints. Few distinctions are 178
made between the personalities of the big saints and those of the lesser saints. They are big because their fiestas are big. The fact that the townspeople have selected four from the rostrum of saints given them suggests a link with the four guardian gods of the pre-Conquest pantheon, but except for San Pedro the Martyr's identification with Chac, or Chaʔuk in Tzeltal, I could not make any other associations.

To say that there is a system of beliefs does not rule out inconsistencies. 776
Some contradictions can coexist without giving rise to tension. Awareness 177
of incongruence either between beliefs, or between beliefs and behavior as- 178
sociated with them, arises in specific events in which the conflict becomes apparent—that is, when the participants must make choices between alternatives that affect their interests.

The people do not recognize any division between pre- and post-Conquest spiritual entities. Sometimes two personalities from Catholic sources may be equated with one of pre-Conquest origin in order to fit a story format, as in the case of Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, with K'oš (Chap-
ter 8). The priests, who had a special dispensation to make whatever cul- [793]
tural translations were necessary in teaching the doctrines of the church (Doctrina Cristiana Lima 1584 III, 3, Recopilación de Leyes, Ley 22 lib. cited in Lamb 1956:531), are responsible for some of the reworking of the two traditions. But local elaborations reveal indigenous cognitive patterning.

Contradictions in myths concerning the origin of crops show some gaps 773
in the union of pre-and post-Conquest legends. The gift of corn is attrib- 177
uted in one myth to the patroness, Santa Lucía, who received it from the 178
patron saint of the neighboring town of Oxchuk. Another myth gives

773 credit to insects who carried it from the hills. Still another myth synthesizes
177 both pre-Conquest and Catholic agents: San Antonio, seeing an in-
178 sect bearing a kernel of corn, persuaded a woodpecker to break open the
rock which blocked the entrance to the hill where the corn was stored and
then organized the insects to bring forth the corn. The contradictions in
these myths do not motivate the people to bring the several versions into
line with one another because the rituals associated with beliefs concerning
776 crops provide an overall insurance rather than a specific contract. The In-
782 dians do not trust their security to any one saint or even group of deities.
177 The two candles lit in the milpa following the harvest are an offering to
178 the "owner of the earth"; along with this, offerings of corncobs are made
to the saints in the church and to the house saint. Even the birds are left
825 an offering of corn kernels in the fields after the harvest so that they will
not be jealous of the farmer.

773 These myths fail to provide specific charters for action. What they do
771 provide is a set of dispositions to behave in certain ways. The underlying
182 disposition is that of self-imposed guilt and recrimination. The ancestors
left their cave because the people failed to give them a fiesta; the spirit of
money left the town because the religious officials in the past failed to
adorn the church and improvidently strewed the floor with green peso
notes in place of pine needles. Sickness and poverty are attributed to their
own failures.

771 Another disposition is that of appeasement through ceremonial enter-
796 tainment. This is carried out in the fiestas for the spirits of the church and
731 the spirits of the heaven just as for the spirits of the house, caves, springs,
182 and hills surrounding the town. Community-wide disaster is interpreted
as a direct result of failure to perform rituals establishing reciprocity
with the spirits. When individuals face crop loss, they review their own
ritual obligations to see what went wrong. The curing ceremony is an-
755 other effort to appease the devil whom the witch has persuaded to give
illness to his victim.

771 A third such disposition is to project human conflict into the superna-
776 tural sphere. The conflict between Santa Lucía and the patron saint of Ox-
821 chuk, Santo Tomás was taken to be the reason for the church tower being
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struck by lightning on two occasions. The solution was to rebuild the 771
tower of metal so that Santo Tomás could not demolish it if he struck 776
again, a defensive reaction which is typical of the Indians in their extra- 821
community relations. When an eclipse of "Our Grandmother the Moon" 182 [789]
occurred during my stay in town, everyone went to her assistance, banging
metal tools and pots, in what was believed to be a fight with the sun.

The emphasis on self-recrimination and guilt in explaining failure mini- 156
mizes the build-up of protest. Economic hardship attributed to a man's 777
own improvidence in relation to his fellow man and God are accepted as 755
his lot in life. The drama of the curing ritual projects the Indians' sense of 182
their own guilt for the suffering and poverty they endure.

POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

The structure of the civil hierarchy has been maintained but organiza- 621
tional changes have occurred which have weakened the basis for it. The 794
alternation of offices between church and civil positions survives in the 177
lower levels, but the new leaders in civil affairs now begin in the Ejido 178
Commission, and few of those who pass as president take on posts in the religious hierarchy. The appearance of continuity has been maintained in communal rituals in which the principales provide the link with the past and the alfereces, until 1966, were the link between civil and religious wings; but in the day-to-day running of the town, the officials do not act on these premises. The balance between officials from each side of the dual division has been upset by the population increase on one side. The abolition of the institution of alfereces gives public recognition to the growing awareness of imbalance. Moreover, the factions based on the new trucking cooperatives that cut across the dual division reduce the effectiveness of the dual division in channeling conflict.

Behavioral deviation from the norms is present in all societies and is not 621
in itself an index to structural change. This comes about when new in- 578
terpretations are given to events that undermine confidence in existing in- 177
stitutions and leaders. Political conflicts in the past were interpreted as a 178
contest between members of the sides of the dual division and hostility

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578 was channeled along existing lines of competition. During my stay in the
177 community from 1964 to 1966, most conflicts were attributed to economic
178 competition between the two trucking cooperatives. Along with this, the
[114] waning of the position of the principales has undermined the confidence
[474] of the people in the system of checks and balances in which the principales
[182] watched over the judges, the judges watched over the curers, the curers watched over the people to see that no one brought in evil, and the ancestors
[756] watched over everyone. Curers are more and more often accused of witchcraft and are frequent victims of homicide. The sense that they are the guardians of the pueblo and the agents of the ancestors is nearly dead. They are consulted only because the people feel that, because of the evil in them, they can fight the evil caused by others.

621 The shift in power from the old leaders to the new has not been accom-
756 panied by a shift in ideological allegiance. The new leaders cannot offer
177 the security the people felt when they were living in the eyes of the ances-
178 tors. The curers remain as a powerful group because of their claims of being able to fight evil; but there is no longer a legitimate authority controlling their use of destructive forces.

561 A system of authority based on rule by elders is a structural correlative
554 of a behavior pattern in which people act out the ways of the ancestors.
177 This applies to the schematized behavior contained in rituals and in tradi-
178 tional productive activities. The ideology of a seniority-based prestige system persists at the explicit level at the same time that behavioral changes in contradiction to this are occurring.

626 Social control in a system of behavior based on what was done in the
177 past depends upon the belief that people are carrying out their lives "in
178 the eyes of the ancestors." Ritual behavior in Tzoˀontahal seems to confirm this, but in view of the waning belief in the presence of the ancestors and the loss of confidence in their agents, the curers, this behavior is a kind of social lie designed to perpetuate the old code of morality. In their everyday behavior, people no longer act on the same premises. The social lie is perpetuated because the people who enjoyed power in the old social system—the curers and the elders—do not wish to relinquish it. It will last only so long as they can find successors, and with the abolition of the recruitment through alfereces, this should not be for long.

The material conditions making for equilibrium are breaking down 105
within the community, but the failure for protest to develop means that 177
old beliefs are not challenged by new ideologies. Adaptations and adjust- 178
ments made in response to changes are still forced into this framework of 181
understandings and expectations. But without any stated changes in belief, 182
Indians are themselves transforming the internal structure of the society by undermining the old gerontocracy and shifting the locus of power to the innovating young men. A binary model of change that poses a transformation from traditional to modern might ignore these internal changes that maintain a given equilibrium intact but that provide a reordering of power making possible a successful adaptation to larger social orders. Tzoʔontahal is a case in point proving that the external conditions are not sufficient to explain fundamental restructuring of the society. People continue to act out a faith in the ways of the ancestors at the same time that adjustments and adaptations are made in response to increasing interdependence in regional and national institutions. The same framework of government is retained as shifts of power give scope to a new kind of leadership. Continuity in forms has the positive effect of preserving a sense of security. The social costs are a slowing down of adaptive responses and a high investment in the "ceremonial fund" (Wolf 1966). The benefits can only be measured by comparison with cultures that have lost these controls.

The universal problem which this community is in the process of working out has been stated by G. H. Mead (1938:22): "How is a society to find a method for changing its own institutions and still preserve the security of those institutions?" The present phrasing of the problem in the community is: "How can we preserve the solutions of the past and apply them to the present?" So long as the problem is phrased in this way, the solution is to exile or kill the deviants or innovators who attempt fundamental change. The threat of witchcraft continues to maintain conformity, and fear subverts the search for an ideology to phrase behavioral adjustments and adaptations in such a way that they will be congruent with future goals. Such an ideology cannot be imposed. Only the people themselves can work out the ways in which meaning and understanding are given to technological and social change.

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593 The reasons for keeping a son are not as pressing as the
[432] reasons for keeping a daughter. Amatenango land holdings are
[184] somewhat smaller than Aguacatenango, and the buying and selling of
agricultural parcels, as long as it does not involve outsiders to
the village, is a common practice which accounts for approximately
16 per cent of land transactions. The

> 423 limited land holding units in Amatenango require minimal
> 241 cooperation in agriculture. Because of fractured land hold-
> 592 ings, fewer than one-half of the households have two tablones
> 464 . . . of land. Therefore, fewer than one-half the households
> can keep more than one man actively employed. Even in those
> households with from two to five tablones, a man and his adult
> son are sufficient labor for most activities except harvest.
> 592 Women's pottery production, however, requires frequent cooper-
> 323 ation. Two tendencies are reinforcing the cooperation of
> 434 women, especially of mothers and daughters: (1) with increas-
> 868 ing need for cash income to buy products which are not longer
> produced in the home, or which have been introduced, money
> [582] is constantly needed. Pottery offers an easy means of acquir-
> [178] ing cash with almost immediate returns, and (2) marriages are
> currently contracted at a later age for girls than formerly.
> Before, about a generation ago, marriages at the age of eleven
> or twelve were the rule. Most of the intensive learning of
> pottery techniques begins at that age. Consequently, pottery
> was taught to the daughter by the mother-in-law if the girl
> was married and resided in the husband's house. (See Frans
> [114] Blom and Oliver LaFarge [1927] who commented that all pottery
> was taught by the mother-in-law.) Most marriages now are con-
> tracted for girls from 14 to 17 years of age. At this time
> they are already proficient potters, and accustomed to work-
> ing with their mother. Therefore, there is a greater stress
> put on their remaining in or near their parental home after
> marriage (Nash, J., 1960:47).[1]

592 The people of Amatenango recognize that during the period
868 in which a woman learns to make pottery, she establishes particular
323 habits of cooperation and a strong solidarity bond with the woman
from whom she learns and with whom she works. "Parents say that
there is an advantage in early marriages, in that the girl would
be more willing to learn the ways of her mother-in-law if she

---

[161] [1] It is also important to notice that with the increase in population over the area, the market has increased.

000 precisely stated. Today, with the total increase in land holdings,
423 the influence of the *Ejido* Commission (however minimal) and the
621 592 introduction of a money economy in which land is becoming more
178 and more of a commodity that can be bought and sold, in terms of
contract transactions, land tends to be thought of as individual
[593] household property. There have been several cases in which
brothers have bought land from each other, although they are the
people from which a line member can expect to obtain land, or in
the absence of it, the necessary help to clear and fence a new
parcel in forested communal territory.

178 Other reasons for the constant breaking of linearity,
613 which reduced the patriline to a very shallow group, are inherent
593 423 in the system itself. First, the antagonism between brothers over
property rights tends to make the sibling group weak, and agnatic
lines split in each generation.

593 Insofar as siblings occupy an equivalent position with
[592] respect to the elders in the household, their sentiments towards
one another are easy and affectionate, but insofar as the elder
sibling has jural authority over the younger ones, the relationship
is marked by constraint, respect and a certain ambivalence.

Thus, siblings are expected to love each other, to give each other company, to help when necessary, and to share, in some aspects of their life, a common position with respect to the community at large, or what Homans calls the external system (1950: 90-94).

The equivalence of siblings, especially those of the same sex, is evident in many observations. A man whose brother is

159
422 During the branding of animals in the village, Francisco received
593 a letter from Candelario asking him to brand the cow and calf for
578 him. Francisco and his son, Epifanio, did so.

This started the conflict. Jose Mendez, Juana's brother, felt that the cow and calf did not rightfully belong to Candelario, nor to Francisco or Epifanio, but to him. Epifanio had a fight with Jose, and the latter, insisting on his rights, which were not very clear, stated that Candelario had sold him the cow (which was not true), when they were working in the lowlands together. Casimira, Juana and Jose's mother, supported Jose's claims over the animals, because it was the money obtained from Juana's bull that had paid for the cow that had the calf. The relatives of her daughter's husband had less right over the animal than Juana's brother.

It is possible that Jose felt that the cow and calf had been purchased with the money obtained from selling a bull which was originally his father's, not his sister's. Even if it was his sister's, he felt he had more right to use it than the sister's husband's brother and father. If owner of the bull or the cow had been a brother rather than a sister, the conflict would not have arisen. (For genealogy see Fig. 17.)

177 Third, with the introduction of Catholicism, although the
178 native belief system has preserved many of its early features,
754 it is now, without doubt, a new syncretic elaboration. The per-
776
613 vasive witchcraft powers are, for example, attributed now to
Catholic saints, but the concept that the lineage heads of principales have witchcraft power to punish deviants within their

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 195]

177
178 lineage (which exists today in many other communities such as
754 Oxchuc), has disappeared. Without the basic belief in the super-
776
613 natural controlling powers of the lineage heads, the ritual activities performed by the lineage as a corporation became meaningless, and fell out of use.

592 Finally, from an economic point of view, the large patriline
613
434 household-compound, as a productive unit, is unfunctional, and the
421 characteristic form of the domestic group is now the nuclear house-
578 hold, which also contributes to the weakening of patriline strength. Within the nuclear household, it is difficult for its members to discriminate between the part of the household income that is derived from the household head in his capacity as a worker and that which is from his unmarried sons; between those profits which are derived from the household head as a capitalist who has provided tools and implements, and finally those which come from his capacity as "owner" of land. In a larger household, differences in labor in-put, rivalry between the women about the food controlled by themselves and belonging to their husbands, or between the men about the property rights of the produce derived from their common effort, tend to create conflict and disunity. In the
592
594 nuclear household, the division of labor is explicit, the role ex-
578 actly and minimally distributed, and conflict, in the case of its occurrence, is likely to be more quickly solved because the fission of the nuclear domestic group is equivalent to the disappearance of the household itself.

178 The functions before performed by the lineage are now
613
592 performed by the household, the community, or by the neighborhood
621
591
184

178

613 592 group, composed in Amatenango of bilateral relatives, and in
621 Aguacatenango, mainly of agnatic kinsmen, but also including some
591 184 affinals and non-related people, because contiguous household-to-household localization is an ideal not always realized (we have discussed previously how in some few cases a son lives in a house given to him by his father, but one block distant from his father's own compound).

178 The result of this complex set of variables is that the
184 lineage has lost, in Aguacatenango, some of its characteristic
591 562 functions. The Amatenango case, to extend the example, shows how,
613 even when (1) patri-virilocality disappears (as a consequence of the women participating actively in the economy), and (2) the status of the sexes with regard to inheritance and rights over property becomes equal, the lineage disappears leaving only small traces of its previous presence: name groups without meaning or function.

Within the same cultural frame, two social groups can
184 show many structural diversities which originate from delicate
adjustments to internal pressures, even in the case in which,
apparently, the variation seems to be the result of influences
coming from the external system.

794 One example, perhaps, summarizes, by its simplicity, the
754 core of this problem. The post of Alferez, as it functions in
[177] the highlands of Chiapas, is an institution that tends to disappear
in the more acculturated towns (i.e., those villages more
affected by the external system). Although it is a religious post,
it does not form part of the Ayuntamiento or Cofradias organization,
nor is it part of the hierarchical ladder. A person can
become an Alferez independently of his previous service in the
government, as long as he can afford the burden financially or
"expenses" of the fiesta for which he is selected. "However, in
undertaking the post, he is subject to witchcraft exercised by
neighbors envious of the wealth he displays in fulfilling his obligation"
(Nash, J., 1960:94). Nash reports three informants who
considered themselves bewitched as a result of having been
178 Alfereces in Amatenango. In Aguacatenango, the post has not been
794 occupied for the last twenty-five years. People refuse to take
754 the position on the grounds that they cannot afford it, and refuse
to "help the pueblo" for fear of witchcraft. One can see
that the same internal pressure, the pressure for economic
homogeneity, has resulted in the same supernatural rationalization:
fear of witchcraft. One of the villages has arrived at the point
where the conflict eradicated itself through the disappearance of
the post which originates it, while in the other town, Amatenango,

178 it is still functioning in the context of the witchcraft conflict.
794
754 So, although the fact that the Alferez has disappeared as a post
[177] can be taken as a sign of acculturation, it is also a reflection
of differential adjustment to internal conflict.

000 Witchcraft itself is a complex phenomenon. It reflects the economic domain, in the sense that witchcraft accusations are important sanctions applied to people who try to deviate from the economic standards of the community. It reflects the kinship domain, insofar as relational roles existing within the kinship frame, in which conflict is likely to occur, are likely targets for witchcraft talk and mutual accusations. It is a territorial domain phenomenon because spatial relations between people affect their social relations and the appearance of conflict: it is common, we have mentioned, that people living on the edges of town tend to be accused of witchcraft more often, and neighbors of the household are expected to be more prone to bewitch household members than people living further away. Finally, it is a psychological phenomenon, insofar as it reflects individual personalities and/or mental distress. Some people show extreme fear of it, and some people doubt its existence (there are agnostics in every society). Some curers, who are individuals with very unstable personalities, are even willing to denounce themselves as witches with the purpose of having others fear them or respect them.
[754] People whom we, in our culture, would consider mentally ill, are
[828] classified as witches in Aguacatenango and Amatenango.

On the one hand, it can be said that witchcraft is a residual category for the explanation of otherwise unexplainable

In addition to this regular ladder
of officials representing the center and its close-lying 621*
barrios are judges representing the *colonias,* or rural 693
settlements, of San Vicente, San Caralampio, and 632
Crus Quemada. They do not regularly attend the
townhall sessions, but always appear at major cere-
monies and at the inauguration of new officials. Only
after I had elicited officials from two informants was
I able to get from the third the three judges of the
colonias with the question, "Are there any other of-
ficials in the cabildo?"

These civil officials constitute the traditional ladder 622
of the hierarchy. The positions of president and *sin-* 624
tiḳu (in Spanish *síndico*), not included in the offices
of the townhall as a category by informants, were [124]
elicited in response to the question stated above.
These posts are occupied by younger men who are [191]
able to read, write, and speak fluently in Spanish. [212]
Literacy, until the present generation, was limited to
those in the 30-year age bracket. Those with such [423]
skills passed immediately into the *comisario ejidal,*
commission for land grants, where they assisted in
the control and redistribution of land granted under
the ejido program, or went directly into the post of
síndico. Thus they were able to avoid the onerous and
time-consuming functions of the traditional posts and
enter into the remunerative post of president, where
their authority was recognized at an early age. With [178]
improved literacy, the competition for such posts is [212]
increasing. Although informants say that the post of 622
president alternates for the two sides of the dual divi- 621*
sion, case materials do not bear this out. 114

The only Ladino in the hierarchy is the secretary. 563
For the first time this year (1964) the post of secre- 624
tary has been taken by an Indian of the town. This is 178
part of the power play described below.

Naming of civil officials is done in November, first 666
in a closed session in the townhall at which each of- 621*
ficial names his successor, followed by a mass meet-
ing *(Komun K'op)* at which the names are read to
the assembled household heads in the plaza. To the 794
question, "What are all the kinds of offices in the
church?" the response was given: *martomaetiḳ,* ma-
yordomos or caretakers, and *alperesetiḳ,* alfereces (or
captains, the Spanish term *alfereces* comes from the
Arabic). There are 16 mayordomos. Role terms for [776]
the mayordomos indicated that each saint was repre-

[P. 213-B]

average annual earnings of a man in this town); fail- 794
ure to accept the post when it is offered brings a jail [434]
sentence. On the following day, during a drinking [681]
session in the townhall with the assembled civil offi-
cials, the reluctant nominee usually accepts. [273]

The civil career of an individual would be one in 156
which he passed (*sk̦'as,* which I gloss as 'pass'; it is 621*
the same verb as Spanish *pasar*) first as police, then
as third or fourth regidor. If he has passed as alferez, 554
he will enter as first or second regidor at this stage, 693
and then go on to second judge and finally become [794]
first judge. If not, he will stop as third or fourth regi-
dor. After reaching the peak of his career as first
judge, he may return to the police group as *martomo-*
rey. Present leaders of the town consider this an [829]
"ugly" custom and say they hope to change it because
it puts men of major age in a position of minor im-
portance. Formerly men had to fulfill six turns in 624
civil office, twice as regidor and twice as judge, to be 693
considered free of further obligation. But now, be- 178 •
cause of increasing population (according to infor-
mants), this has been lowered to five required turns. 156
The post which has been eliminated is that of assis-
tant judge, which is now filled by a representative of
one of the two barrios.

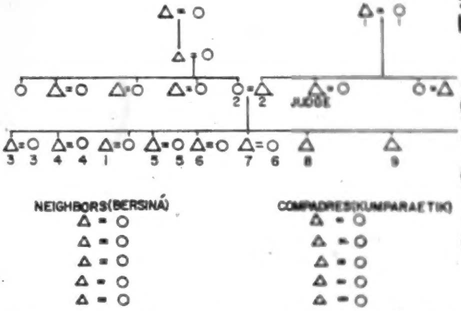
Throughout his career in office, a household head 621*
is expected to alternate between the civil and religious 156
posts. Religious posts are considered less onerous 794
since they require only six months of service, from
the fiesta of San Pedro and San Pablo at the end of
June until January 6, and the men are on duty only
Sundays and holidays. A balanced number of six
turns in each of the branches of the hierarchy was ex-
pected, prior to the reduction of the number of civil
posts to five, to bring one to the end of one's career.
In a census of 311 household heads made in 1964, [125]
passage in office shows a balance between posts under-
taken in each wing of the hierarchy. Of 13 men over
70 years of age, five had completed service in civil and
religious office. Three who had passed as president
had served only once or twice in each wing of the
hierarchy. The remaining five had a balanced but in-
complete career.

In the religious hierarchy, a man passes first as 794
nič'anil k̦uč haʔ, 'minor who brings liquor.' Then he 554
will pass as *ʔaliʔbal*, the assistant to the *k̦obraria*, par-
ticularly charged with the slaughter of the bull for the 156
large fiestas. These "servants" were not distinguished
from other mayordomos in the initial listing of offi-
cers, but were mentioned in the description of fiesta

[P. 215-A]

activities. Following this, he then serves as *tatil* of any 794
saint of minor rank, then as *tatil* of San Pedro Martyr 554
or San Francisco, followed by a turn as *tatil* of the 156
ḳobraria Virgin Santa Lucia, and finally as *tatil* of the *ḳobraria* Sacramento.

The Tzeltal role terms in both the civil and reli- 621*
gious hierarchies reveal the preconquest age-ranking 554
system. This is evident in the use of elder and junior 794
titles for mayordomos (*tatil* and *nič' anil martoma*) 621* 554
and in the use of *mas mamališ* (more senior) for 794
higher rank offices. 561



561
178 ●
601
574
796
621*
608
693

CHART 3 — ASSISTANTS AND PARTICIPANTS IN HOUSE FIESTA OF JUDGE (ELICITED)

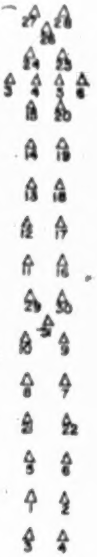
Circles indicate women; triangles indicate men. For role term applying to number, see Chart 4.

The informant's understanding of the hierarchy is 178
that of a core of officeholders in three ranked seg-
ments (Chart 1). This is coded in the group terms for 124
officials. Roles peripheral to the major categories such 621*
as those of rural judges, fiscal and women prayer- 794
makers, are elicited only with repeated questioning 554
or with reference to some event in which they function. These roles differ from those mentioned first in that they are either of little significance to the individual informant (this would explain the consistent omission of the rural judge by the people of the center) or are not part of the required posts incumbent upon every male household head to undertake (this might explain the omission of the president, síndico, principales and fiscales in the first eliciting session). Structural principles made explicit by the informants are (1) hierarchical rank, (2) progression from lower to higher posts, and (3) territorial balance in representation of the dual division. An implicit corollary of passage through offices beginning with lower ranks is the age grading of officeholders. Other structural aspects emerged in the description of behavior, described below.

[P. 215-B]

9:Nash E-5 (1964) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Tzoʔontahal

MOST ETHNOGRAPHIC REPORTS on the civil-religious 621*
hierarchy emphasize status and the functional 121
goal of community integration. What we have failed 794
to impart is the dynamic aspect of status, role. In the 554
divergences between expected and enacted patterns 178
of behavior in those occasions when the individual
"puts into effect the rights and duties which consti- 621*
tute the status" (Linton, 1936, p. 114), we have 121
micrometers to the measurement of change. The de- 794
tails of change may be small—for example, a shift in 554
the lineup of officials in a procession—but it may be 178
a clue to important organizational changes. The be-
havioral changes in details of this sort provide cues to
eliciting information that will explain the diver-
gences. An important supplement to these cues are 621*
the unsolicited comments of informants. Sometimes 124
[P 222-A] 178



621*
794
554
788
533

CHART 10 — NEW YEAR'S DAY PROCESSION OF NEW OFFICIALS (OBSERVED)

OFFICIALS:
29, 30, 31 Comisarios of San Vicente, San Caralampio, and Cruz Quemada

Remaining numbers refer to role terms in Charts 7 and 9.

these apparently irrelevant comments reveal the 621*
power play going on behind the scene of the ritual. 178 •

The observed schedule for the civil inauguration 124 (App. 1, column 4) differed from the elicited in four details. The first of these was an item omitted by both informants: after liquor was served in the house of the president, the entire company stood up and "turned toward the wall" (App. 1, Q. 20). When I questioned my informant, he corrected the orientation "toward the wall" and said that they were turning toward the east in deference to the leader of all the saints of the east, led by Santo Aʒio. He said that it was done in all household celebrations in order "to be sure that the devil does not enter." Belief concerning [776] these saints is fragmentary, and perhaps because of this, behavior relating to them is not easily recalled. These behavioral sherds, when cut off from the belief system they once dramatized, survive in "perpetuating the custom of the ancestors" *(hič sluwar hič liḳem meʔtiḳtatiḳ)*.

Another detail not mentioned by informants was 124
the presence in the house of the president of the rural 632
colonia inhabitants (Chart 6). This omission is typi- 622
cal of the neglect in reporting the activity or presence 574
of anyone other than residents of the center. When I asked what they were doing there, I was told they came "to know the president."

Finally, an important divergence from expected 621*
behavior occurred when the schoolteacher, instead of 875
the secretary, delivered the oath of office. This change 178
was evidence of the schoolteacher's success in a fac- 578
tional struggle developing around new economic enterprises in the town. The former Ladino secretary 621*
was in close alliance with the former president and 578
had supporters in the group of 20 co-owners, In- 474
dians from the village, of the truck when he had purchased. When the incoming president with his 875
brother bought a truck with the assistance of 30 494
members of a truck-owning cooperative, a new focus for factional strife appeared in the town. The new cooperative was supported by the schoolteacher in his own bid for power. When the truck owners ran into any difficulty with the highway patrol, carrying wood or passengers without permit, the driver would refer them to the schoolteacher, who would then claim it

[P. 222-B]

Third, there was opposition on the
score that the president had never passed in any other 666
public office. The only incident revealing the discon- 578
tent was the firing of eight shots at (or above) the 622
president's brother following the house festival on
the eve of the inauguration.

The principales, who "formerly were the ones who 624
ruled," no longer have a part in the power struggle 178

621*
794
554
346

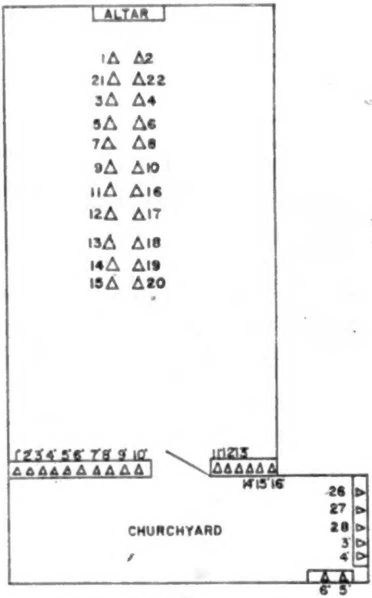


CHART 11 — NEW OFFICIALS INSIDE CHURCH, NEW YEAR'S DAY

OFFICIALS:
1'-16' Mayordomos
Remaining numbers refer to officials listed in Charts 7-9.

which centers on party membership and economic 624
competition. Their ceremonial role in rituals is pre- 178
served as a link with the past as well as a sign of con- [794]
tinuity between old and new officials.

In the inauguration of the religious officials, diver- 794
gence in the elicited and the observed event (App. 178
2, column 4) occurred first of all in the shift of locale 578
for the common meal from the churchyard to the
house of the *ʔaliʔbal* instead of in the churchyard [264]
(App. 2, Q. 19). This was a clue to the power strug-
gle going on in the church. When I questioned my [793]
informant about the disparity, he told me the follow- [273]
ing story:

[P. 223-B]

794 793 578 178 273 Three years before [in 1961] my father was the *tatiḳ* of Sacramento. One day he and the other mayordomos were drinking at the door of the church. The priest came out and demanded that they stop because this was the house of God. The *tatiḳ* replied that it was the custom of the pueblo, and he and the other men refused to leave. The priest went back into the church and returned with a gun in his hand. The mayordomos seized wood which they had gathered in the yard of the church. They threatened the priest with this and he went back into the church. He announced that he would not give Mass, or perform wedding or baptismal ceremonies. We did not mind if he did not give the Mass or would not give weddings, but the people were frightened if he would not give baptism. The mayordomos had a meeting and they agreed to give up drinking in the church if the priest would continue to give baptism, but they would no longer care for the pigs or bring wood for the priest without payment. We pay him 15 pesos for an ordinary Mass and 40 pesos for a sung Mass, so he should pay us for help. The priest was in agreement with the mayordomos.

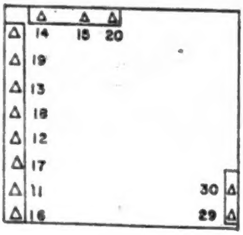


CHART 12 — KITCHEN OF POLICE, AFTER CHURCH (ELICITED)

Numbers refer to role terms listed in Charts 7 and 10.

[124] My informant had not realized that the ban affected eating in the yard of the church, but it was implied because liquor is served before the meal "to prepare the stomach" *(ya štal sḳoip weʔeletiḳ)* and after the meal "to wash down the food" *(yaʔlel weʔelil)*.

The statement on who defines what performances, and in what setting, provides an index to the locus of power. The priest is gaining more control over the building, maintenance, and developments around the church. The mayordomos give at least a half-day's labor to the priest's projects each Sunday. When they cannot work, they must pay the elder *ḳobraria* two pesos for a half-day's work missed, or 4 pesos for a full day. The proceeds are used to buy liquor, which the mayordomos drink. Thus the social control is ex- 000

Thus the social control is ex-
erted through the traditional hierarchy, but the bene- 794
fits of the labor go toward the priest's projects. The 793
priest speaks with some satisfaction of the increasing 178
control the "church" (he) has over the people. He [626]
maintains that this is because the people are more "civilized." For him, the indices to civilization are the facts that there is no drinking in the church, there is greater attendance at Mass, and more people are wearing Ladino clothing.

The second divergence in the elicited and observed 621*
accounts for the religious inauguration occurred 794
when the civil officials, including the town secretary 182
and síndico, assisted the religious officials in counting the money collected for the fiesta.

An important supplement to the behavorial data 124
were the unsolicited comments of informants. Their anecdotes often gave me clues to their involvement in the gamesmanship of operating within culturally defined patterns. Although the informant focuses on the formal question, his growing boredom with the sequence (Who sat next to him? What did they do next? Who was there?) leads him to muse about the associated ideas and images which did interest him, often self-damaging or negative aspects of the culture which he might want to hide if questioned directly. The technique resembles that of the astronomer instructing the novice stargazer: "If you want to see the Pleiades, look at Jupiter, and out of the corner of your eye the nebulous cluster of stars of the Pleiades becomes visible."

The following illustrates how this free association 124
emerged in the formal eliciting procedure: 578

> Informant 2 constantly reiterated the danger his 682
> brother would encounter in undertaking the post of president as we discussed inauguration procedures. For example, when he gave me a list of participants at the Judge's house when his father took on that post, he mentioned the name of a widow, Cika, and provided the unsolicited information that her husband had been shot on December 16, 1963, the fiesta of Halal Meʔtik Santalusia. Informant's statement: "He did not know he had an enemy, and so he walked alone that night. Each fiesta someone is killed. During the fiesta of San Francisco this year, another man in Bočibal was killed. No one knows why. He was knifed with a machete. I never go out alone at night because of the fights with the cooperative. They [the members of the opposing cooperative] are very hard (*haʔ ben bolik*). They claim they will kill us."

What prompted the next revelation was my com- 124

[P. 224-B]

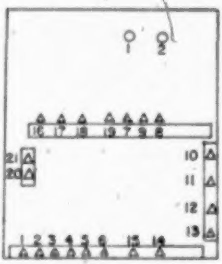
9:Nash E-5 (1964) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Tzoˀontahal

The struggle CHANGE OF OFFICIALS
for political office within the 621*
community is a response to regional and national 178 •
power centers. Behavior in this struggle is alien to
responses controlled in ritual or structured performances. 156
The strategies developed in these situations fit [682]
the pattern of political homicide more typical of the [171]
Indian towns of the central plateau (Friedrich, 1964)
than of the highland Chiapas area.

[P 226-B]

I SUMMARIZE the evidence offered in the inaugural 621*
acts first in terms of a functional analysis of the 105
ceremonial behavior and second in terms of struc- 794
tural and organizational changes revealed in the 178
strategies of interaction. The following goals are at- 18
tained in the rituals of inauguration: [128]

1. *Preservation of continuity.* In the highland Maya Indian communities the problem of maintaining continuity is crucial because most of the offices are changed simultaneously.



796
794
608
554
533

CHART 14 — HOUSE OF THE COFRADE OF SACRAMENTO, FIESTA OF SAN PEDRO SAN PABLO (OBSERVED)

WOMEN (circles):
- 1 *Meʔil K'op*
- 2 *Sčebal smeʔ*

MEN (triangles):
- 16 Cofrade of Sacramento (*Kobraria Sakramentú*)
- 17 First Nakawane (*Sba Nakawane*)
- 18 Second Nakawane (*Sčebal Nakawane*)
- 19 Third Nakawane (*Yolebal Nakawane*)
- 20, 21 Guitarist (*Balnial Alpultero*)

Remaining numerals refer to role terms listed in Chart 13.

are changed simultaneously. The emphasis on conti- 621*
nuity is evident, first of all, in the repetition of bodily 105
and verbal performances. Repetitive behavior, the es- 794
sence of all ritual, provides that fulfillment of expec- 178
tation which assures participants in a performance 18
of a link with the past. Bunzel (1952, p. 251) has shown that this familiarity of ritual "sets" in a variety of ceremonials provides linkage with the past in the inauguration in Chichicastenango. Repetition in behavior is reinforced by verbal references to perform-

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ing "what our mothers and fathers did" (App. 1, Q. 621*
19; App. 2, Q. 37, Q. 64). Second, continuity can be 105
seen in the presence of both old and new officials in 794
the townhall. In this setting, the old officials acknowl- 178
edge acceptance of the new officials (App. 1, Q. 28).
Finally, of greatest importance in establishing con- 18
tinuity are the principales, who await the arrival of [624]
the new officials with the old officials (App. 1, Q. 28)
who pass over the symbol of authority (App. 1, Q.
31), and who remain alone in the townhall for the
return of the new officials, when they have gone to
church.

2. *Role commitment.* The officials are members of 621*
closed corporate communities, integrated in a prior 105
set of kinship and other social relations. They cannot 794
rely on anonymity when acting in their official capac- 178
ity as judge or policeman. Thus one of the functions 18
of the inauguration as a rite of passage is a disengage-
ment from the preexisting network of obligations and 156
a commitment to the obligations of the office (cf. Par- 554
sons, 1951, pp. 80–84; Gluckman, 1962, p. 34; Can-
cian, 1964). Behaviorally, this function is indicated in [576]
the unfailing use of the term *Mam* (elder respect
term) in both address and reference. The reference [293]
to the holy nature of their task (App. 1, Q. 19) and of
the symbol of their authority, the "holy" staff (App.
1, Q. 30) which they always carry when discharging
an official errand, establishes the supernatural au-
thority on which the role is based. The effectiveness [691]
of these symbolic role identities in neutralizing prior
affective commitments can partially be judged in that
most dispute cases are brought before the local courts
rather than referred to higher courts, suggesting that
the complainant expects fair treatment.

3. *Role learning.* The inauguration provides a setting in which the individual who is about to assume office learns what is expected of him (cf. Fortes, 1962, p. 82). The instruction of the novice officeholder is acquired most importantly in the home from the speeches of the *nakawanchetik* and cofrades (App. 1, Q. 19; App. 2, Q. 37, Q. 38, Q. 64) and in the directions he may be given in the ceremonial setting (App. 2, Q. 39, observation).

4. *Introduction of new officeholders to the vil-* 621*
lagers. The new status of the officeholders is made 105
794
178
18
788

[P. 227-8]

public in the procession around the plaza (App. 1, 621*
Q. 39). The mayordomos gather in the church spe- 105
cifically to view the new incumbents (App. 1, Q. 50). 794
There is less public display of new officeholders in the 178
case of the religious officials than in the case of civil 18
officials. [788]

The morphological description of the structure of 105
a society is inadequate unless it includes role behavior 121
as well as status positions. The behavioral data pro- 182
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571

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796
554
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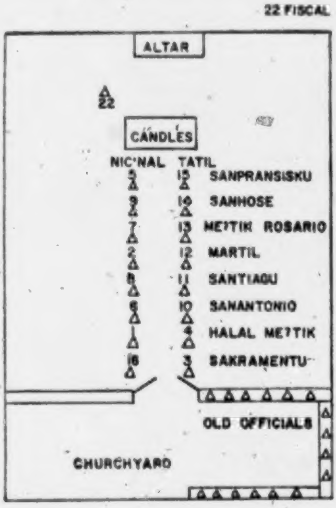
22 FISCAL
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CANDLES
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SANPRANSISKU
SANHOSE
MEʔTIK ROSARIO
MARTIL
SANTIAGU
SANANTONIO
HALAL MEʔTIK
SAKRAMENTU
OLD OFFICIALS
CHURCHYARD

CHART 15 — NEW MAYORDOMOS INSIDE CHURCH, FIESTA OF SAN PEDRO SAN PABLO (OBSERVED)

105
vide the basis for describing the physiology of a cul- 121
ture, or how actors and social groups interrelate in 182
carrying out tasks. In the inaugurations, the house- 554
hold emerged in the behavioral descriptions as an 571
important ritual domain supporting the civil and re-
ligious hierarchy. Similarly, the asymmetrical rela- 621*
tion between the role of religious officials in the civil 105
inauguration and that of civil officials in the religious 182
[P. 228-A) 794
[592]
[571]
[554]

621*
inauguration is deduced from both elicited and ob- 105
served behavior. These data complement the elicited 182
material on structure in rounding out the ethno- 794
graphic model of social reality. 554

Specification of the behavioral data on which struc- 571
tural and functional statements are made should pro- 121
vide the basis for more precise comparisons over time
and between communities. I turn to the observed in- [571]
teraction to summarize the evidence for microchange [178]
within the community.

Outside of the formally prescribed behavior sched- 621*
uled in the inauguration, a struggle for power is 105
going on which is leading to important organiza- 178
tional changes in the town. This was suggested in the
substitution of the schoolteacher for the former La- 578
dino secretary in the act of giving the oath. Factional struggle of the leaders of the new enterprises was revealed in this substitution. Further evidence of change is seen in the redefinition of the president's position in relation to that of the principales. The potential power which the post offers to the incumbent and those who back him is now recognized. The risks are higher as the competition for the post increases.

In the religious sphere the priest's increasing con- 105
trol over the domain of the church is seen in the shift 793
of setting for the common meal from the churchyard 178
to the *ʔaliʔbal's* house. This evoked the story of the 794
open confrontation of the priest and cofrades a few 578
years before. Public counting of funds by civil officials suggests an attempt by the new leadership to thwart the priest's dominance over the cofrades.

In the emergent struggle for power within the com- 621*
munity, we see not just a defensive reaction to La- 105
dinos by Indians of a corporate community, but a 178
play for stakes in the same world. This suggests that 829
the corporate community, now and in the future, serves not so much as an insulation from the outside world as in the past but as a springboard for the entry of the Indians into fuller participation in the national society.

[P 228-B]